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O L I V I A;

OR,

DESERTED BRIDE.

VOL II.

BRITISH MUSEUM

OLIVIA;

OR,

DESERTED BRIDE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

HORTENSIA,

THE RAMBLES OF FRANKLY,

AND

THE FASHIONABLE FRIEND.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

OLIVIA;

OR, THE

DESERTED BRIDE.

LETTER. II.

MISS PELHAM TO MRS. VANE.

YESTERDAY I arrived at my own home, and met with a moſt affectionate reception from the beſt of parents, whom I found cheerful and well; but alas! I could not help weeping for the ſorrows of my friend, on the ſoft boſom of parental tenderneſs. Sir Robert Clifton was here to receive me. Yet I am at

this time ſo much out of conceit with love, and ſo alarmed at the unlimited power with which the ceremony that authoriſes the rights of hymen inveſts the lordly ſex, that I verily believe I ſhall never find ſufficient courage to go into a church, in order to return a ſlave. They may flatter as they will; it is only meant to draw us into ſnares, from which there is no retreat. Submit not, my charming friend, to the ſentence of your unjuſt and jealous tyrant; aſſume the pride of injured innocence, and the rights of liberty. Mr. and Mrs. Goldwyn had not a doubt of your being guiltleſs; would be glad to have you with them: at the ſame time they will recommend obedience and ſubmiſſion to be practiſed. Come to me, I will do every thing to amuſe the preſent moment, and to render you forgetful of the paſt: all my friends will exert themſelves to the ſame purpoſe. Miſs Creſwell is with us, and has obtained leave of abſence for three months. You are not a moment

from

from our thoughts; and a recollection of your ſituation throws a gloom over our gayeſt ſcenes. Evade, then, the injuſtice of a ſentence which no precedent can juſtify, and come to us; the world will not dare to condemn you, whilſt ſelf-preſervation is conſidered as the firſt law of nature: the moſt reſolute have not been found able to ſupport an abſolute ſeclusion from ſociety. To ſubmit to ſuch a rigid ſentence, without deſerving it, I would not do it for any tyrant in the univerſe!

I have told Sir Robert Clifton, that, till the laws are altered in favour of my ſex, I will not become a wife; but the arch deſigner only laughs at my fears, and reſts his hopes on that affection which in ſome unſuſpicious moment I have weakly diſcovered. But your tyrant has taught me wiſdom, by ſhewing me the danger of putting our happineſs in the power of thoſe ſo ready to abuſe it; whilſt a former diſappointment has given me reaſon to

doubt his whole ſex.—Write to me every opportunity: but far rather had I receive a meſſage to fetch you here in perſon. You have, ere now, heard from Mr. Goldwyn: perhaps too, you have heard from Mr. Vane. Impart, my Olivia, every circumſtance, nor impute this requeſt to the curioſity with which our ſex is often reproached, but to that unalterable affection which I feel for you, and which makes every event that concerns you of infinite conſequence to

ELIZA PELHAM.

LETTER III.

MRS. VANE TO MR. GOLDWYN.

TAUGHT by your precepts, my more than father, to expect that a certain portion of affliction would be intermixt with the many bleſſings that had been thrown in my

my path, and inſtructed by your example not to repine, as one diveſted of hope, at the firſt approach of trial, I mean to convince you, by my patient reſignation, that I have not been inattentive to your inſtructive leſſons. I own I have been imprudent; yet intentional guilt I utterly diſclaim. Alas, my dear Sir, if it is a crime to weep for the anguiſh of a fellow-creature, then indeed I was guilty: I even have repeated my fault. This was the crime for which I ſuffer.—Mr. Vane—ah, my dear Sir! what is become of him? with joy I would haſten to earth's remoteſt bounds to be reconciled to him, and to hear the gentle ſound of pardon from his lips. At this moment, methinks, I would gladly die to make him happy. Contrary as it may appear to the romantic notions, too often encouraged by my inexperienced ſex, I am convinced that I love Mr. Vane with a paſſion far more lively than I ever felt for the rival for whom he has ſo cruelly deſerted me. His long at-

tachment, his unbounded generoſity, his flattering indulgence—Oh! that he could but know the heart he ſo unjuſtly ſuſpects! he would then be convinced that he alone inhabits there!—I rejoice that no one has attempted to ſee me ſince my ſecluſion from a world that I already ceaſe to regret.

And will you come to me, my beloved parents? Can I complain of the injuſtice of Mr. Vane, when he ſo kindly permitted me to be bleſt with your ſociety, though only once a year? Yet that once was an indulgence beyond any other which, in his abſence, I could enjoy.—Come to me, the firſt hour you can be ſpared, we will talk of the dear, ſelf-devoted wanderer; whilſt from your lips I ſhall be taught to ſmile on affliction, conſider adverſity as a friend, and encourage hope to viſit this manſion of deſpair. Aſſure my brothers and ſiſters I love them more than ever, and regret they cannot be of your party hither: but tell them

not

not the reaſon, leſt they ceaſe to love the cauſe of their baniſhment.

Ever your grateful
and obedient daughter,

OLIVIA VANE.

LETTER IV.

MRS. VANE TO MISS PELHAM.

I NEED not tell you, Eliza, that your letter afforded me pleaſure, becauſe I hope you are too well acquainted with my diſpoſition, to doubt the friendſhip as ſincere as it is permanent: nor can I help regretting that profeſſions are all that are now left me.

Talk not to me of the world, my beloved friend, I have no farther buſineſs in it. Retirement is ſaid to be the parent

of contentment. But then, you will exclaim, it muſt be the voluntary choice of thoſe who ſeek its ſhelter. True—yet I truſt it will at leaſt afford peace and ſerenity, even to me. Think how the world has uſed me, Eliza, nor wonder at the philoſophy which the leſſon inculcates. I am deſerted by him who vowed to be my companion, friend, and protector. The people who knew ſo little of me, and by whom I am ſurrounded, loudly condemn me, without enquiring what has been my fault; and I am cenſured even for the few virtues I poſſeſs. Every action is miſrepreſented, and I am accuſed of crimes that my timorous ſoul ſhudders but to think of. To a few generous hearts alone I ſtand acquitted. Oh that I could be inſpired with Roman fortitude! inſtead of that I cannot look back without trembling, or forwards without horror. My beſt reſolutions, like falſe friends, forſake me when their ſupport is moſt wanted. This is the laſt ſolemn hour of ſilent night:

night: perhaps 'tis the gloomineſs of the hour that impreſſes this additional deſpondence on my ſpirits. I will not write any more till the morning's light has given me more reſolution.

In Continuation.

I am now more cheerful. The ſun has enlivened me with his gladſome rays, and the ſurrounding ſweets of nature have, for the preſent, ſentenced to baniſhment that culprit Diſcontent.

My ſituation, if not happy, is ſupportable: at preſent I have every want ſupplied, and I have enough to ſatisfy the neceſſities of many, far more wretched than myſelf. Join with me to bleſs the generous hand that furniſhes me with this ſweet indulgence: but I am thought guilty!—and ſo have many other innocent and far greater ſufferers. Pride and I have done with each other; therefore I will be ſilent, and patiently ſubmit to the

obſtinacy of my fate, in hopes that my Henry—alas! no longer mine—that Mr. Vane may appear without blame.

You enquire how I ſpend my time. I divide it, as equally as circumſtances and the weather will permit, between reading, working, walking, and muſic. I never attempt to go beyond the limited bounds of my own ſweet garden, which I ſhould, even upon thoſe terms think a paradiſe, if my companion had been left me.—I ſpeak to none, except my own ſervants, receive no meſſages; but have ordered them to tell every one that ſends, I can ſee no company.

Why will you, Eliza, ſuſpect the ſincerity of your preſent lover for the guilt of a former? 'Tis ungenerous: it may give pain to the heart which I have heard is moſt fervently attached to you; and it may, one time or other, be the means of bringing repriſals upon yourſelf, that may be attended with infinite, and perhaps unavailing regret.

No tidings have I yet heard of Mr. Vane, no trace is left me to diſcover his retreat; but as the imprudent, the unfortunate Davenport is pronounced by the faculty out of danger from his wounds, I live in the ſweet hope that we are both inhabitants of the ſame kingdom: methinks, if I knew he was in another clime, every hope would forſake my ſolitary boſom.

Next month I flatter myſelf with the delightful expectation of being folded in the arms of my paternal friends, that ſo kindly ſupplied the place of thoſe affectionate and amiable parents, whom inexorable death ſuddenly ſnatched from their helpleſs daughter. Oh! if they are permitted to look down on earth, how ſublime muſt be their feelings! How much exalted above the ideas of us mortals their heavenly attachment to Mr. and Mrs. Goldwyn, for having ſo tenderly guarded, and anxiouſly watched and protected, the erring footſteps of the ſuffering

OLIVIA VANE.

LETTER V.

Mr. Goldwyn to Mrs. Vane.

ON Monday next, my beloved child, we will be with you. Endeavour to meet us with fortitude, nor let an interview, ſo earneſtly deſired by all, be overclouded with the tears of deſpondence: convince us of your reſignation by the cheerfulneſs of your reception. The more I reflect on the haſtineſs and ſingularity of your huſband's conduct, the more I am convinced, from the acquaintance I have long had with his diſpoſition, that he is already beginning to regret the effects of his own impetuous jealouſy: reſign him then for the preſent without complaining. He muſt ſerve his probation to repentance before he will be able to acknowledge he has acted wrong. When once his love and humility can ſubdue his pride, and his reaſon, joined to the unerring obedience

with

with which you continue to obſerve his harſh decrees, has convinced him that you were innocent, he will again return to you, as the only means of recovering the happineſs he forfeited in the firſt moments of ungovernable paſſion.

Your mother is preparing for her journey, and anxiouſly looks forward to the period which will reſtore to her the delightful ſatisfaction of embracing her amiable child. Believe us, my Olivia, you were never ſo dear to our ſouls as at this preſent hour.

WILLIAM GOLDWYN.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIII.

The Meeting.

THE intended viſit of the Goldwyns took place in a few days after the receipt of the preceding letter, and, for a time, put an end to the correſpondence. Olivia had waited impatiently for their arrival, and flew to meet them at the door. The firſt hour afforded ſuch tranſporting delight to the forſaken Olivia, that ſhe almoſt forgot her ſituation: that over, it was impoſſible for her to conceal the dejection which had taken poſſeſſion of her mind. The eyes of thoſe affectionate friends too ſoon diſcovered that ſhe was much thinner; and the paleneſs of her countenance made them apprehenſive that her health was in danger of ſuffering materially from her ſolitude and confinement:

ment: and although they could not think of perſuading her to leave the Grove, they determined to make uſe of every effort in their power, whilſt they ſtayed, to render it as pleaſant as poſſible. Mr. Goldwyn, though extremely diſpleaſed with the imprudent conduct of Davenport, would not give the moſt diſtant hints concerning him; yet ſometimes, when he obſerved the dejection of Mrs. Vane, he ſecretly wiſhed he had taken no ſtep to prevent their following the dictates of their own hearts; convinced that, however imprudent, an union between the parties could not have been attended with a larger portion of miſery to each than the ſeparation had brought upon them. Alarmed, leſt the life of Mrs. Vane ſhould be endangered from the want of advice, which ſometimes at the beginning of the moſt dangerous complaints will prevent their being fatal, he ſent for Randal, and told him, he inſiſted on Mrs. Vane's having ſome gentleman of the faculty ſent for to

attend

attend her. This requeſt, unfeeling as he was, he could not pretend to diſpute; and he ſuppoſed it would meet with the approbation of his patron, when he was informed of it. Mr. Goldwyn, thus authoriſed, begged he would apply to the beſt apothecary the place afforded, entered into converſation with him, but avoided mentioning the circumſtances that had occurred to bring about ſo ſtrange a revolution of affairs at Vane-Grove; and vainly endeavoured, by the gentleneſs of his manners and the benevolence of his ſentiments, to ſoften his rugged nature, and intereſt him in behalf of the ſuffering Mrs. Vane. But there are ſome natures hard and inſenſible as the rock: no ſoftneſs, no pity ever reacheth the callous ſoul of impenetrable avarice. 'Tis only by the hand of affliction, when it is pointed againſt themſelves, that they can be taught to feel. They have no idea that they were formed to weep at another's woe, or pour the balm of comfort into another's wounds.

Awed,

Awed, however, by the venerable, the gentle authority which Mr. Goldwyn aſſumed on this occaſion, he ſent to deſire Mr. Beevor would attend Mrs. Vane; which he did the very hour he received the ſummons. This was the ſame gentleman that had accompanied Davenport to town during his painful journey, after the unfortunate rencounter. He was not long unacquainted with the cauſe; for Davenport had, without reſerve, imparted to him the hiſtory of his own life, of his early attachment, and his want of reſolution to conquer it—nor did he ſcruple to mention, at the ſame time, the imprudence of the ſtep he had taken, and for which he juſtly ſuffered. Mr. Beevor condemned his conduct, but pitied his ſufferings; and cautioned him with friendly earneſtneſs againſt every future indiſcretion.

He endeavoured to enforce his arguments, by picturing to him the miſery it had already brought on the innocent Mrs. Vane; by the ſuſpicion it had given riſe

to

to in her huſband, and the danger of its having the ſame effect in the boſom of Mrs. Davenport: but, on receiving a promiſe from his patient never again to break through the bounds of the moſt rigid prudence, he agreed to inform him, from time to time, of what was going forwards at the Grove; and had faithfully done ſo from the time he left him.

Thus prepoſſeſſed in favour of the lovely Mrs. Vane, he viſited his fair patient. Luckily for her, Davenport's ingenuous confeſſion had ſecured her a friend in this worthy man, who determined to exert his utmoſt care, judgment, and attention, to effect a reſtoration of her health, and afford her conſolation. His profeſſion, after once being called in, would be a pretence for ſometimes viſiting at Vane-Grove; and he determined to take the advantage ſo fair an excuſe afforded him. Mr. Goldwyn was much pleaſed with this good man, who after a few viſits, did not heſitate to inform him, that Mrs.

Vane's

Vane's complaint was ſeated in the heart; adding, he ſaw no alarming ſymptoms, nor had any reaſon to doubt but the reſtoration of her mind to peace would inſure the return and continuation of her health. Said, that no attention on his part ſhould be wanted to prevent any danger; that it was adviſeable to make uſe of every precaution to avoid the encroachment of complaints that might otherwiſe prove ultimately alarming in their conſequences.

Mr. and Mrs. Goldwyn, happy to find the perſon fixed upon to attend Olivia ſo well acquainted with the nature of her caſe, ſtrongly recommended her to his moſt watchful care and obſervance. They were happy that their apprehenſive tenderneſs had been the means of procuring her ſo worthy and humane a friend; and they left Olivia with far leſs regret than they otherwiſe would have done.

Again immerſed in the moſt profound retirement, Mrs. Vane returned to her uſual reſources for the employment and amuſe-

amuſement of her weary hours. She had not received a ſingle reproach from either of her tender friends; and that ſoothing reflection, in ſome meaſure, reconciled her to herſelf. Had her conduct been very faulty, would they have ſpared reproof? It would have been their duty not to have done ſo; and therefore ſhe hoped they did not ſuſpect her of being guilty.

Mr. Beevor conſtantly viſited at the Grove, but he recommended only a few ſtrengthening medicines, which were pleaſant to the taſte, created an appetite, and, what was ſtill more agreeable, was a good excuſe for the frequent viſits of that gentleman, who felt a kind of fraternal affection for his fair patient, and a ſtrong deſire to ſoften the hardſhips of her long confinement.—Eleven months had now nearly elapſed, and no tidings had been heard of Mr. Vane—not a circumſtance could be diſcovered that gave a ſingle ray to hope he was beginning to feel compunction for the captivity he had ſentenced Olivia to undergo.

undergo. Mr. Beevor in vain endeavoured to find out his retreat. Randal was applied to; but it was too much his intereſt to keep the ſecret he had been intruſted with for him ever to betray it:—Davenport had likewiſe employed emiſſaries for the ſame purpoſe. Mr. Goldwyn had not been inactive: but fruitleſs had been all their united endeavours. In the mean time, Mr. Beevor ſent Olivia all the new publications he could procure, furniſhed her frequently with new muſic, and took every opportunity to encourage her to expect more agreeable days.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIV.

What by Romantic People would be called an Adventure.

OLIVIA was one morning more melancholy than uſual, and was ſitting in a penſive attitude, thinking upon all the hardſhips of her ſituation, and revolving in her own mind every event of her paſt life, when ſhe was ſuddenly interrupted by the entrance of a ſtranger, followed by a ſervant, who had been one of thoſe domeſtics that had lived the longeſt in Mr. Vane's family. The poor fellow apologized to his miſtreſs for the intruſion of the gentleman, which he aſſured her it was not in his power to prevent. He would then have withdrawn; but Olivia deſired him to wait within hearing. Then, turning to the ſtranger, ſhe begged to know the occaſion of his viſit. This adventurous

venturous hero, whoſe name was Wilford, was a young libertine of faſhion, that was come to ſtay with a gentleman in the neighbourhood; and who, hearing from every tongue the ſituation of Olivia, and the penance to which ſhe was obliged to ſubmit, had made ſeveral wagers that he would reſcue the lovely priſoner from her confinement, and perſuade her again to taſte the joys of love and liberty. He was, however, ſtruck with the beauty of her countenance and the elegance of her form; and awed alſo by the manner of her addreſs, he wiſhed he had not made the inſolent attempt of breaking ſo rudely into her retirement. But knowing he ſhould get not only abuſed but laughed at, if he ſneaked away without telling her the reaſon of his viſit, the unbluſhing profligate boldly told her, that he was actuated by compaſſion to offer himſelf as her champion, to free her from the hand of injuſtice, and the ſentence of an uſurper, who had aſſumed a power, which neither

neither the law of nations nor the rights of men had authority to enforce. Smile on me then, cried the accompliſhed villain; reſolve to aſſert your juſt rights, and let me be your protector. Olivia was aſtoniſhed and terrified at his effrontery, and feeling an indignation ariſing in her boſom which ſhe could not ſuppreſs, ſhe called her ſervant: then, looking with contempt on Wilford — "I know not, cried ſhe, by what authority you have dared to enter this houſe, and in the ſame moment ventured to cenſure the conduct of another, without knowing how to govern your own with diſcretion. I conſidered myſelf as ſecure from inſults beneath the protecting roof of my huſband; but I find no retreat is held ſacred by the wanton libertine. Withdraw, Sir; and the next time you meet a woman of virtue, learn from your preſent folly to treat her with reſpect, leſt you are called to account for your unpardonable rudeneſs." Wilford, humbled, aſhamed, and awaken-

ed

ed to a ſenſe of his ill behaviour by this ſpirited reception, attempted to ſtammer out an apology, and pleaded having made too free with the bottle. Olivia ordered the ſervant to ſhew the gentleman the door, deſiring him not to trouble her with his converſation, or attempt to make ſo degrading a vice as drunkenneſs an excuſe for his unexampled inſolence.

Never had Wilford, in any moment of his abandoned life, felt himſelf ſo mortified, ſo creſt-fallen. He returned to his companions, vowed that Mrs. Vane was the moſt lovely termagant he had ever ſeen: but ſhe had given him a lecture, that had determined him to let her remain where he found her, and commended her huſband for confining her. The truth of the ſtory, however, was ſoon known; the conduct of Mrs. Vane was generally admired: that of Wilford univerſally condemned; and he very ſoon left the country, deſpiſed and mortified.

Mrs. Vane was much hurt in this affair. She ſent for Randal, told him how ſhe

had been inſulted, and entreated he would, whenever he wrote to Mr. Vane, petition for another ſervant to be added to the family; for as her ſituation was ſo well known, ſhe might otherwiſe meet more affronts of the ſame kind. She likewiſe urged him, with all the energy of woe, to tell her if Mr. Vane ſtill remained in the kingdom, and if he thought he would return, or conſent to mitigate the rigour of that ſentence he had ſo unjuſtly pronounced againſt her. She received no anſwer: No hope was encouraged by this moſt unfeeling mortal, to ſoften the gloom with which he ſaw her ſurrounded; and he withdrew, without promiſing to comply with any of her requeſts. He found it ſo much his own intereſt to prevent Mr. Vane's returning to the Grove, that he had long determined to leave no art untried to effect his purpoſe: He hoped the ſeparation would continue for life, as a reconciliation might not only deprive him of farther power to deceive, but unfold ſome ſecret tranſactions which it would

would be rather dangerous to have diſcovered.

It is not to be wondered at that Mr. Vane, whoſe jealouſy and anger were thus artfully kept alive, ſhould be ſtill too much enraged to imagine himſelf in an error, or even to think, with any degree of calmneſs, of thoſe wrongs which had driven him forth a voluntary exile: And poor Olivia ſuffered a thouſand mortifying inconveniences, by being left in the power of a wretch who would have oppreſſed his father or beſt friend, to add to his own heap of ill-gotten wealth. Mrs. Vane, at length, however, acquired ſufficient reſolution to inſiſt upon his ſending a few lines from her to Mr. Vane. He promiſed to comply with her requeſt; but, after reading the contents of her ſoul-rending epiſtle, committed it to the flames.—The following letters will explain the ſentiments of the different parties at this intereſting period.

LETTER VI.

MRS. VANE TO HENRY VANE, ESQ.

AS the knowledge that I am the moſt miſerable of all created beings will not ſoften your heart in my favour, I have little expectation (for long have I been bereft of hope, the only friend of the wretched) that any thing I can ſay will have ſufficient weight to alter your ſentiments. Nothing but the conſcious innocence I have ever poſſeſſed, of which neither cruelty nor injuſtice can deprive me, could have ſupported me under ſuch complicated trials. The world, no doubt, condemns the unfortunate woman, who is deſerted by her huſband: the world I can diſregard, becauſe I do not deſerve its cenſure; but your cruelty, the loſs of your heart! — ah! where is the antidote to be found that will make me inſenſible to that ſevereſt of all my miſeries! I have been

been ill;—yet I feel no pleaſure at telling you I am recovered, becauſe it will not impart any ſatisfaction to you. I would gladly have died to reſtore you to your friends, your peace, and native land:—my death too would have cleared that ſpotleſs fame, which your well-known ſuſpicions have irreparably wounded; yet this you will not believe.

In vain I write, in vain I endeavour to revive your affection for the loſt Olivia.—Abandoned, refuſed even the liberty to juſtify my conduct, branded with ignominy, and left in an hour of the moſt excruciating agony! Ah Henry! dear, miſtaken huſband! there will come a time when my wrongs (perhaps when I have long forgotten them in the grave) will torture you to think of them: yet the poor victim of your diſpleaſure wiſhes them to be buried with her. I am no diſſembler; and although I wept for an unfortunate being, and commiſſerated his ſufferings, I never for one moment wrong-

ed, even in thought, the huſband of my choice.

OLIVIA VANE.

LETTER VII.

MR. VANE TO MR. RANDAL.

RANDAL, in the midſt of pleaſure I am tortured with diſcontent, and my diſtracted ſoul has ſtill the moſt violent conflicts to contend with. In vain I ſeek repoſe from the alluring ſmiles of beauty, or go in the purſuit of contentment. The beauty that captivated my believing heart could only be found in the falſe wife I have abandoned; and the voice that alone could huſh my ſorrows to forgetfulneſs, the laſt time I heard it, was in tender accents trying to ſooth the anguiſh of my rival. Yet perhaps I have been too haſty. — But it cannot be! — I had the moſt convincing teſtimonies of her guilt. — Davenport has her heart. —

Why

Why then did I meanly ſtoop to accept her proſtituted hand? Why did I ſacrifice my peace to gratify a paſſion my reaſon ſhould have taught me to conquer? Or why permit the artful diſſembler ſtill to diſgrace the manſion of my anceſtors? I am at this, and indeed every moment of my painful exiſtence, the ſlave of jealouſy and humiliating fears. Sometimes I ſtand ſelf-condemned, the next hour I could hurl deſtruction on the head of that being I once adored.

How is ſhe, Randal? Is ſhe pale? Does her health appear hurt? Are her ſpirits good? Does ſhe attempt mixing with the world? Does ſhe meet any one ſecretly? Perhaps ſhe has her private viſitors. The all-ſubduing Davenport—that baſe, that enſnaring rival, may ſometimes be the inmate of that dwelling, from which he has driven its wretched owner. Ah! if I thought it poſſible—my ſword ſhould again——but I dare not think.—Yet how ſhall I fly myſelf?

Watch her carefully, Randal; let none of her actions eſcape you. Why don't you write oftener? Why are you not more particular in anſwering my queſtions? If I thought ſhe was wretched, I know not how I ſhould bear it. Yet, methinks, I ſhould, if poſſible, be ſtill more miſerable if you told me ſhe was happy. She deſerves no peace: ſhe has robbed me of mine, deprived me of every conſoling hope, and driven me forth a wanderer. Surely, then, ſhe ought to ſuffer a more than equal ſhare of wretchedneſs. Tell me if ſhe does; but beware of deceiving

HENRY VANE.

LETTER VIII.

MR. RANDAL TO HENRY VANE, ESQ.

Honoured Sir,

I Am ſorry my letters are not more ſatisfactory; yet I endeavour to be as particular as I can. I am ſurpriſed you continue

tinue to make yourſelf unhappy. Truſt my age, and believe my experience, when in the name of both I venture to aſſure you, there is not a female in the world worth the tenderneſs and anxiety of a moment.

Mrs. Vane is pale and thin; but I am of opinion that her altered looks are more owing to confinement than to any regret for your abſence, or repentance for having been the cauſe of your quitting England. She does not, that I can diſcover, attempt going beyond the limits of Vane-Grove. What occaſion has ſhe to do ſo, whilſt you have ſo amply allowed her to procure every indulgence within its delightful bounds? Had ſhe been my wife, I ſhould have thought one hundred pounds a year more than ſufficient for ſuch a woman. Excuſe me, Sir, if I ſay more than you think I ought: but, when I recollect your wrongs and her ingratitude, my indignation knows no reſtriction. I have not yet paid her the laſt

half-year's ſtipend. Reflect, my good Sir, what a vaſt ſum is a hundred pounds for half a year. Suppoſe I carry only fifty? Mrs. Vane is impatient for the money, and talks of being aſhamed at her inability to pay her tradeſpeople and ſervants. I wiſh ſhe had not more reaſon to be aſhamed of her conduct towards you.

Whether ſhe is happy or not I cannot tell. I hear of no viſitors ſhe receives, unleſs her guilty inclinations lead her to do ſo at improper times. I believe ſhe does not attempt going abroad; nor can I pretend to ſay that there are very joyous doings at the Grove. I go frequently at thoſe hours I imagine myſelf leaſt ſuſpected. Once or twice I have heard the ſound of the harpſichord, at which I find ſhe ſpends much of her time. She was ſinging too. I did not like it. Suppoſe you ſend orders to have it removed, or locked up: She certainly does not deſerve to be amuſed. Your garden is kept in nice order; your plants and ſhrubs are

thrifty,

thrifty, and taken care of: Mrs. Vane is fond of the garden: 'tis an expence might be ſpared, unleſs you partook in the pleaſure it affords. As you are driven from the paradiſe of your own forming, I know of no buſineſs any Eve has to inhabit there.

Mrs. Vane has once been ſlightly indiſpoſed ſince you left England; but as ſhe was not in the leaſt danger, I thought it better not to tell you any thing about it. Mr. Goldwyn was at the Grove during her real or pretended illneſs: He inſiſted on Mr. Beevor's being called in; and, as I had not your orders to the contrary, I did not attempt to contend that matter long. She is now quite recovered. Perhaps it was only an excuſe to procure company. Beevor is a handſome young fellow: I did not much approve of his attending her. If his going is diſagreeable to you, ſay the word; neither he nor any one elſe ſhall be admitted: I will be very watchful. I would not adviſe you to

think of returning to England till the clamour and buſtle this diabolical affair has occaſioned are worn off. You would but ill brook the contempt and ſneers of your acquaintance. Every one here thinks Mrs. Vane guilty: in my opinion it does not admit of doubt.

Your rival is quite recovered, and, I am told, as gay and charming as ever: the women are now all mad after him. Be, however, under no apprehenſions on his account. Should he dare to come near the Grove, he ſhould have reaſon to repent his raſhneſs. In the cauſe of ſo good a maſter, I ſhould not fear to revenge his wrongs at the hazard of my life.

Endeavour to keep up your reſentment; give not way to a forgiving ſoftneſs, that could not fail expoſing you ſtill more to the ridicule of the world. Rely on my care, my attention to your honour and intereſt: I am devoted wholly to your ſervice, and ready at all times to

obey

obey your commands. Mrs. Vane, to my great ſurprize, has not mentioned writing to you, though I once hinted it would be proper for her to do ſo. Her proud heart is not yet ſufficiently humbled.

Ever your moſt faithful,

and obedient ſervant,

T. RANDAL.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXV.

A further Proof of Randal's Villany.

THE inflammatory letters of this vile incendiary, whilſt they ſerved to ſtrengthen the ſuſpicions of Mr. Vane, and greatly increaſed the agonies of his ſoul, anſwered the baſe purpoſe of the unfeeling writer, and made his miſtaken maſter more than ever determined againſt a reconciliation; and he endeavoured as much as poſſible to loſe reflection in the deluſive blandiſhments of illicit pleaſures.

Mrs. Vane, by the ſordid cruelty of this mean-ſoul'd wretch, who took delight in diſtreſſing her, was once obliged to part with ſome of her jewels; for as the keeping up the garden was attended with conſiderable expence (but which, being the only amuſement that afforded her ſpirits any relief, ſhe could not think

of

of giving up) ſhe was often reduced to almoſt her laſt ſhilling; and inſtead of receiving two hundred pounds a year, ſhe was ſeldom able to obtain more than half that ſum. However, as matters were unfortunately circumſtanced, ſhe would rather have ſubmitted to want ſome of the neceſſaries of life, than have uttered a ſingle complaint againſt Mr. Vane. She therefore reſted all her hopes of ſeeing better and happier days on the mercy of that Being, who knew her innocence to be as perfect as her trials were ſevere. And as ſhe had been taught to conſider no evil ſo great as guilt, ſhe naturally and juſtly concluded there could be no good ſuperior to virtue, or a mind at peace with itſelf.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVI.

A New Correſpondent.

MRS. Vane, ſoon after the buſtle, which her interview with Wilford had occaſioned, was blown over, received the following letter from an unknown hand; the contents of which afforded her the pureſt ſatisfaction, by convincing her that there ſtill remained a heart that knew how to pity her diſtreſs, by its kind endeavours to afford her a momentary relief, and inſpire her with the hope of ſeeing better and more cheerful days.

LETTER IX.

To Mrs. Vane.

THOUGH a ſtranger to your perſon, I am not ſo to your unmerited ſufferings; nor have I ever cheriſhed a doubt of

of your innocence. But it is not merely the being innocent will ſecure us from misfortune; we muſt, in every action of our eventful lives, ſtrictly obſerve the appearance of being ſo: nor will that always ſecure us from ſuffering for the unguarded conduct of others, as you know from guiltleſs experience. Little cauſe have you then to regret being baniſhed from a world, an intercourſe with which affords ſo moderate a ſhare of happineſs to thoſe who are allowed the moſt unbounded enjoyment of its pleaſures: as little reaſon have you to regret the loſs of what is called mixing with ſociety. How many, who think themſelves ſurrounded by partial and ſincere friends, are ſpending their fortune, and loſing what is far more valuable, their youth, their precious time, to ſacrifice their own taſte to the capricious faſhion of the day, and the humour of others, in order to be thought well of! And what is their reward? The laſh of envy, the abuſe of ſcandal, and the

the ridicule of their pretended friends. I am no miſanthrope; but I obſerve the humours of people with careful circumſpection. Some exceptions may undoubtedly be made to the degrading picture I have drawn; but believe me when I aſſert, that this dark ſide of the painting is but too faithful a repreſentation of the world in general.

Friendſhip is a tender plant; it will not thrive in a ſoil that is overrun with the weeds of vice and folly: it loves the more rural ſcenes of humble life; nor flies the ſhades of ſolitude. Aſſure yourſelf that you poſſeſs the treaſure. I am proud to declare myſelf one amongſt the number of your friends. You are at this time far from being happy: you almoſt deſpair of ever being ſo. But truſt me, though I am neither magician nor conjurer, the day is not far diſtant that will remove every lowering cloud of corroding anguiſh; and a bright proſpect of happineſs will again appear, to reward your pious reſignation.

My

My ſituation in life is ſuch as affords me opportunities not only of obſerving, but becoming acquainted with, the hiſtories of many perſons, which to the world were never made public; and many a one have I known, that, under the appearance of cheerfulneſs and mirth, have carried about with them a load of anguiſh, which the boſom of innocence can never experience. My next ſhall convey to you the hiſtory of a lady I once knew; which will, I am convinced, ſerve to reconcile you to a ſentence that you are conſcious of not meriting, by ſhewing that the accompliſhment of our early wiſhes, when repugnant to our duty, is often the ſource of ſucceeding miſery.

A FRIENDLY SPY.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Conſolation and Conjecture.

OLIVIA read this letter over many times, and found increaſing ſatisfaction by every peruſal. She wiſhed the world not to condemn her; and therefore to know ſhe was thought innocent by her friends, was the higheſt gratification to her heart. She had various thoughts reſpecting the friendly writer, but without being able to form any conjecture that could lead her to fix on the perſon; and ſhe ſecretly wiſhed it might not be long ere another letter from the ſame hand arrived.

She at firſt ſuſpected it might be Mr. Goldwyn, who ſhe knew was fondly deſirous to relieve her from anxiety; but after informing him of the circumſtance, ſhe

ſhe was convinced of his not being the writer.—Miſs Pelham likewiſe regularly continued to correſpond with her; but as many of her letters contained only the effuſions of a heart that felt for the diſtreſſes of a friend, only ſuch will appear as are neceſſary to unfold and carry on the hiſtory of the fair friends.

LETTER X.

Mrs. Vane to Miss Pelham.

IN vain does my kind Eliza endeavour to flatter me into a perfect reconciliation with myſelf; notwithſtanding, I have not been guilty of any premeditated or actual crime, I have ſurely been weak, unguarded, and imprudent. Repeatedly have I called my heart to the ſevereſt account, and I truſt have conquered whatever has been wrong;—no longer ſhall it influence my actions during my future life.

life. Oh that the boſom on which it now relies for all its future peace, would kindly receive the guiltleſs fugitive, and return to its doubly-deſerted owner! But I begin to think I never ſhall be ſo bleſt as to ſee this dear, this cruel huſband more: ſtill does he elude every enquiry that is made after him, and voluntarily ſubmits to a ſeparation which impoſes, I fear, on himſelf an almoſt equal degree of miſery as it entails on me. I can ſupport my own ſufferings with leſs regret than I can the reflection of what he endures. The noble, the almoſt unexampled generoſity of Mr. Vane's conduct proved, beyond a doubt, that I was once dear, very dear to his heart.

To have been cenſured and even inſulted, methinks, I could have borne without repining—but to be deſerted by my huſband! ah that's the wound for which I can find no cure, but in his return! for the thorn is deeply planted in my heart. I have conquered every tinc-

ture

ture of vanity, though I cannot ſubdue the tender ſuſceptibility of my nature. Few of my friends are allowed to ſooth the ſingular hardſhips of my ſituation.—By you I was ever acquitted of intentional wrong in weeping for another's woe.

Sorrow is now my only companion, and Deſpair is my ſiſter; yet I endeavour all I can to forget what I have been, and to remember what I am—a deſerted, a ſuſpected wife! I lived a ſhort time ſurrounded with all the ſweets, all the joys of affluence; but gladly would I yield all claim to their return, to baniſh every doubt from the boſom of my huſband.

Why will you cheriſh a diſtruſt of Sir Robert Clifton's attachment, becauſe you was once deceived by another? 'Tis unjuſt, 'tis contrary to the generous nature of my friend.—No longer, then, let ſuſpicion haunt your mind, nor ſuffer it to throw a gloom over the happy proſpects that ſurround you.

OLIVIA VANE.

LET-

LETTER XI.

Miss Pelham to Mrs. Vane.

YES, my Olivia, it was ungenerous; I feel myſelf humbled by the remembrance of having given way to unjuſt ſuſpicions, and I tremble at the miſery in which my own folly had nearly involved me. Accept the whole of the recital, and let the being reduced to the humiliating confeſſion of having acted wrong be my only puniſhment. Indeed, my own reflections are ſufficient of themſelves to prevent a relapſe. 'Tis cruel to ſuſpect the whole of Nature's family for the fault of an individual.

From the time of my return from Vane-Grove, Sir Robert Clifton redoubled his aſſiduities; he made uſe of every perſuaſion which the love or art of man could invent, to obtain my conſent for being his: but my mind was diſtracted with doubts of his ſincerity. I was ſuppoſed

poſed an heireſs to a large fortune:—that might be the bait which had enſnared him.—I imparted my fears to my father, and he readily came into my ſcheme of putting Sir Robert's ſincerity to the teſt.

My father, you know, has for many years been a very conſiderable banker in the city, and thereby accumulated a large fortune; but as every engagement in a buſineſs of ſo extenſive a nature is often attended with danger, and ſometimes ended with ruin, and people's circumſtances miſrepreſented, or ſaid to be in a proſperous way when they are on the eve of becoming bankrupts, my father agreed to take the advantage which his ſituation afforded, of dreſſing up our concerted tale under ſo favourable a maſk of probability.

The next time Sir Robert made his appearance, my father received him with a viſible dejection marked upon his countenance. I likewiſe ſeemed to be an equal ſharer in his melancholy, by ſitting penſively by the ſide of my parent. Sir Ro-

bert eagerly enquired the cauſe of this apparent diſtreſs; and my father, with well-diſſembled agitation, told him he had reaſon to apprehend that, by the failure of ſome perſons with whom he was deeply involved, he ſhould be obliged to ſee his name added to the number of thoſe whom an equal unguarded confidence had betrayed into ruin.

Sir Robert appeared much affected by this alarming recital. He ſtood ſilent and thoughtful about five minutes—and in thoſe few moments I felt all my doubts and ſuſpicions of his want of ſincerity confirmed, and imagined, falſely imagined, that he was laying a plan to ſhake off the unfortunate engagement which he had before ſo eagerly ſolicited to have accompliſhed: but I was ſoon convinced of my own injuſtice, and of the integrity of my lover; and the diſcovery was ſucceeded by a torrent of delight, which was not unaccompanied with a fear that he would deſpiſe the ſtratagem that had been practiſed with him,

whenever

whenever he was made acquainted with its falſehood.

My father interrupted the ſilence which Sir Robert obſerved in the firſt moments of ſurpriſe, by lamenting the effect our misfortunes ſeemed to have upon him; at the ſame inſtant told him, he was neither ſo mean or baſe, as to inſiſt upon the performance of his promiſes, which had been made at a time when his daughter had, by her expectation of a good fortune, ſome pretenſions to equality: but that now, the poor butterfly, which had been ſo eagerly followed and admired amidſt the ſunſhine of proſperity, muſt expect a reverſe of ſcene, and meet it without murmur or reſentment.

To be poor had long been known to be a fault that could not be excuſed; 'tis a diſeaſe, he ironically added, of ſo malignant a nature, that few will venture to adminiſter relief; and therefore it muſt perform quarantine for life, leſt the infection ſpread.

This pointed addreſs rouſed Sir Robert from his reverie, and inſtantly diſcovered to him the injuſtice his ſilence had made my father ſuſpect him capable of practiſing with me. He inſtantly told my father, that the wretchedneſs of his ſituation made him readily pardon the ſeverity of his reproaches, which at that time he was conſcious of not deſerving. He declared, upon his honour, that his regard for Miſs Pelham was fixed upon too ſolid a baſis to be ſhaken or leſſened by any reverſe of circumſtances. He ſaid, that my having been entitled to the expectations of a very large fortune, could not be unpleaſant to a young man, whoſe eſtate, though large, had been left by his father encumbered with one or two heavy mortgages, and ſubject to the payment of ten thouſand pounds to his ſiſter at the age of twenty-one.

He eagerly caught hold of my hand, and preſſing it tenderly to his lips, with an unaffected emotion, earneſtly ſolicited

my

my father and myſelf inſtantly to fix a day for our marriage. If my Eliza, he cried, can conſent to be mine, more than the neceſſaries of life, from that moment, will not be wanted to make me the happieſt of men. Then, turning to my father, by conſenting to my becoming your ſon, you will be entitled and authoriſed to expect from me every aſſiſtance in my power to reinſtate your affairs, and enable you again to carry on your buſineſs without any danger to your credit.

We were affected, gratified, and flattered into a compliance with every wiſh of his impatient heart.—Next Monday I am to become the wife of Sir Robert Clifton, and on our return from the altar, his generous, his undoubted love is to be rewarded with thirty thouſand pounds;—yet I dread the effect the diſcovery of our duplicity may have upon a heart that ſo nobly ſtood the teſt of ill-founded diſtruſt; and I repent having acted in a character which I deſpiſe myſelf for aſſuming! I

ſometimes enquire, with impatience, why the inſincerity of a worthleſs object was permitted to plant ſuſpicion in a ſoil that it never grew upon before? All my doubts are, however, buried in the grave of oblivion; and I hope the Phœnix which ſhall ariſe from their aſhes, will produce mutual confidence and undiſſembled love, bound in the grateful fetters of everlaſting gratitude.

In reſpect to yourſelf, my beloved Olivia, I am diſpleaſed with the patient reſignation, the unexampled humility, which at the ſame moment I cannot help admiring. Oh! that you would come and, by your delightful example, teach me to deſerve the heart I now venture to pronounce my own! I want not to confer an obligation; but, like the reſt of that ſelfiſh world you ſo juſtly may complain of, I wiſh to receive a favour, by being bleſt with your dear ſociety.—Miſs Creſwell will not leave me till Eliza Pelham is raiſed to the more exalted diſtinction of being

being Lady Clifton. Sir Robert is not unacquainted with your ſtory, and regrets with me your unpleaſant ſituation, and the mortifications you are obliged to encounter. He joins with me in admiration of your virtuous fortitude, and reſolute yet gentle obedience; and waits with impatience for the happy moment in which he may be admitted to a ſhare of your friendſhip.

Preparations are now rapidly going forwards, and my indulgent parents are eagerly ſettling matters for the diſpoſal of their whimſical daughter. They have no doubts of the worth of my intended huſband, and therefore are anxious to ſee me irrevocably his; but doubly ſo, for that moment which is to afford them the delightful pleaſure of rewarding the generous ſincerity of his love: yet, I almoſt tremble at the awful thought of this being the laſt time I ſhall have a right to ſign myſelf

ELIZA PELHAM.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Matters of Courſe.

MRS. Vane felt the ſincereſt pleaſure at the happy proſpects which awaited her favourite friend, and ſecretly breathed a petition that no unlooked-for cloud of adverſity might intervene to deſtroy them. She regularly correſponded with Mr. Goldwyn; and his letters never arrived without imparting to her the conſolation they were meant to convey.—The following letter which ſhe received from her unknown correſpondent ſerved at this time, in ſome degree, to reconcile and render her more ſatisfied with herſelf, and, by ſo doing, anſwered the friendly intention of its benevolent writer.

LET-

LETTER XII.

To Mrs. Vane.

THE following hiſtory I have encloſed for the amuſement of a ſolitary hour. When our ſituations are not ſuch as we could wiſh, it is ſometimes neceſſary to compare them with that of others; and we ſhall find a certain, though a ſad conſolation, in being convinced that an equal, or perhaps a larger portion of ſorrow has fallen to the lot of others, than we ourſelves have had to encounter.

In the earlier part of my life I was bleſt with one only ſiſter, whoſe leaſt perfection was that of being fair; yet ſhe was lovely as the infant-roſe, gentle as the vernal breeze, and cheerful as the birds of Spring: ſhe was the darling of my mother, the delight of my father, and dearer to my heart than language can expreſs.

Our fraternal affection was ſtrengthened by the moſt lively friendſhip. She was the confidant of all my youthful hopes, the ſweet ſoother of my earlieſt cares. To me ſhe imparted in return her ſorrows, and made me the glad partaker of her innocent pleaſures. Before ſhe was ſeventeen, a young gentleman, in good circumſtances, made her an offer of his hand: our parents were gratified, and warmly became his advocates. Lucy was cold to the united entreaties of her parents and her lover: her youthful heart was averſe to his propoſals: his perſon diſguſted her, and his manners were diſpleaſing. My father was reſolute in being his advocate: the lover obſtinately determined to perſevere, and therefore ſhe was often obliged to liſten to a tale that every interview ſerved but to render more diſguſting.

At this time ſhe received an invitation to paſs a few weeks with a young friend, who lived at about twenty miles diſtance. My father and mother, not only ſoftened, but

but alarmed by her altered looks, readily agreed to her accepting the invitation, in hopes that change of air might be of ſervice; but hinted, they expected to find her more ready to oblige them at her return, and that, ſenſible of their indulgence and deſire to make her happy, ſhe would comply with their wiſhes, by accepting the hand of a worthy and amiable young man. Lucy was ſilent; and we ſet off. Never was poor wretch, who had been many years immured in the gloomy confines of a priſon, more eager to obtain their liberty than my ſweet Lucy was to fly from a place, once the ſcene of her happineſs, but now become fertile with diſtreſſes. Fond of her parents to enthuſiaſm, yet unable to conquer her averſion to the object to whom they ſo earneſtly wiſhed her to be united; I endeavoured all I could to ſooth the anguiſh of her ſoul, which was but too viſibly painted on her countenance: every feature was marked with woe: I happily ſucceeded; and as

we drew near the habitation of her friend, deſpair gave way to hope, and ſhe recovered ſome degree of cheerfulneſs before I left her to repoſe her cares on the boſom of friendſhip. Alas! I ſuſpected not that I left her in the paths of danger, and expoſed to the lures of temptation. A brother of the friend to whom ſhe went, ſaw the blooming charms of my Lucy, and in ſeeing became enamoured: in the eyes of my unſuſpecting and unhappy ſiſter he had every accompliſhment. She compared him with her former lover; and the contraſt appeared ſo flattering, as juſtified, in her erring opinion, the ſacrifice of duty:—they went to Scotland and were married. This favoured lover was a lieutenant in the army: young and unacquainted with the world, they doubted not but the pay he received would enable them to live genteelly.

When the fugitives returned, they were ſoon reconciled to their friends; but forgiveneſs was all they had to expect, neither

ther of their parents could aſſiſt them with a ſum ſufficient to purchaſe a better commiſſion; and they ſoon found their income very inadequate to their wants. Poverty brought with it diſcontent and care; and my Lucy's huſband became not only moroſe but inconſtant, not only inconſtant but unkind. Her charms, by becoming familiar, ſoon loſt their influence; and her uncomplaining ſweetneſs, though no reſtraint upon his pleaſures, was thought dull and inſipid, and ſhe herſelf an incumbrance he now wiſhed to be rid of; and therefore ſhe was inſulted by wretches encouraged to affront her, and ſuffered every mortifying indignity in ſilence.—She ſoon fell into a decline.—I flew to ſuccour her—I carried her to her parental home.—I compelled her baſe, her unfeeling huſband to treat her with ſome appearance of tenderneſs in the viſits he made her; but the wound was given too deep, it had reached her heart. She conſidered her former diſobedience to her parents

rents as the cauſe of her preſent ſufferings, and earneſtly wiſhed to be releaſed from a world in which ſhe had acted ſo faulty a part. With theſe reflections continually ariſing to torment her, ſhe grew worſe, and her complaints increaſing, ſoon baffled all the powers of medicine. It was in vain that her parents aſſured her of their forgiveneſs, and blamed their former perſecution; in vain that I ſoothed, or her huſband promiſed amendment, and to atone by future unremitting kindneſs the cruelty of his paſt conduct.—Death had made ſure of his prey; and ſhe expired in the arms of her mother, an early and lamented victim. The wretch, who had thus ſent this blooming flower to an untimely grave, fled from thoſe whoſe reproaches he dreaded, becauſe he knew they were merited; and ſoon fell himſelf a ſacrifice to thoſe vices which had ſent the innocent Lucy to her tomb; and to which ſhe was ſoon followed by her unhappy parents. Her former lover, unable to conquer

quer his attachment, yet lamenting its effects, withdrew to a diſtant part of the kingdom; and no tidings was ever heard of him after. Thus, by a train of unfortunate events, was I deprived of a ſiſter inexpreſſibly dear to my heart: and the world loſt one of its faireſt and moſt amiable objects. Alas! had my Lucy been able to reconcile her inclinations to her duty, or my parents leſs ſanguine in their wiſhes and expectations as to the diſpoſal of their child, they might have lived to ſee her happy, whilſt her grateful and tender attentions would have ſoftened their cares, and ſmoothed the rugged path of declining life!

I have long been reconciled to a loſs, which at firſt I lamented as the heavieſt misfortune, and conſidered as the ſevereſt trial that could befal me; but had her days been lengthened, I am now perſuaded they would only have ſerved to increaſe her miſery; for the man to whom ſhe unfortunately gave both hand and heart,

heart, was unworthy of either, and inſenſible of the treaſure he poſſeſſed in my regretted ſiſter, whoſe mild and gentle nature not only ſhrunk with terror from vice, but would have felt the moſt agonizing pangs of grief at every freſh proof of neglect and unkindneſs from the man ſhe loved, and for whom ſhe had forfeited her duty.

I leave you, Madam, to make your own comments on this ſhort but intereſting ſtory; and although I know you will join with me in beſtowing a tear on the innocent ſufferer, yet if you make compariſons, you will be better reconciled to your own unpleaſant and trying ſituation, becauſe it is unattended with ſelf-reproaches, any act of wilful diſobedience, or intentional imprudence.

A FRIENDLY SPY.

Olivia made uſe of the friendly application this letter meant to convey, and felt

felt a thankful gratitude ariſe in her breaſt that ſhe had not acted repugnant to her duty, whilſt the gentleneſs of her nature led her to make a thouſand excuſes for the unfortunate Lucy. We cannot here omit inſerting the letter which ſhe likewiſe received from Lady Clifton, a few days after her marriage.

LETTER. XIII.

LADY CLIFTON TO MRS. VANE.

I Have been a wife ſome days, my dear Olivia, and I do not feel thoſe apprehenſions I expected to have done at parting with my liberty. When my father, at our return from plighting our vows at the altar, preſented Sir Robert with ſecurities for thirty thouſand pounds, and by that means diſcovered the deceit we had practiſed upon him to put his ſincerity to the teſt, he received them with ſurprize,

and

and a ſullen kind of pleaſure, that too well informed us his honour was wounded by having been ſuſpected. A few conceſſions on my part, and a friendly embrace from my delighted father, quickly compromiſed matters; and the thirty thouſand pounds ſoon regained its conſequence, and was no longer treated with contempt.

I have been, ſince the day of my marriage, engaged with a ſucceſſion of viſitors; for we removed into a very large houſe of Sir Robert's, in Portman-Square. I have no reaſon to be out of humour with the world, and therefore it would be unjuſt in me to pretend a diſlike to its buſtle and gaiety; yet believe me, my ſweet friend, I could be content to leave it all, could I be permitted, with my worthy huſband, to ſpend a few weeks with you. Sir Robert is no ſtranger to Mr. Vane; he has been in company with him, but has no claim to be reckoned amongſt the number of his acquaintance. He declares that he would readily go a

thouſand

thouſand miles, could he bring him to your feet. I have never yet been in any of our public places, without carefully looking around me, in hopes of diſcovering him amongſt the croud. I once ſaw a gentleman, who ſo ſtrongly reſembled him, that I was eagerly going to catch hold of his coat, in order to prevent his eſcaping me; when luckily the perſon turning round, diſcovered a face to which I was a ſtranger. If he keeps himſelf much longer concealed, ſuppoſe we get him advertiſed, and offer a handſome reward to the perſon who reſtores the runaway—if he promiſe to pay the expence, by future good behaviour.

Excuſe the cheerfulneſs, my Olivia, that has ſtolen from my heart to my pen, and let it not lead you to ſuſpect that I no longer am a ſharer in your grief. At this moment I ſhould rejoice to be a partaker of your ſolitude; but how much more to receive a ſummons to witneſs its termination! We ſhall certainly, ere long,

come

come and reſcue you from the horrid gloom of Vain-Grove by force, unleſs your unfeeling jailor performs that act of juſtice himſelf.—I am afraid, notwithſtanding the ſoul-inſpiring influence of your ſweet example, I ſhould be unable to follow it; and perhaps ſhould more involve myſelf in the toils from which I ſhould endeavour to eſcape.

ELIZA CLIFTON.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIX.

And a longer One than has been uſually found in this Work; containing variety of Matter.

AS the anſwer from Mrs. Vane to this letter was chiefly confined to congratulations, and good wiſhes for the happineſs of her friend, it was not thought neceſſary to inſert it. Two years had now nearly elapſed ſince the commencement of Olivia's ſecluſion from the world. Retirement was, from uſe, become agreeable. She no longer regretted the loſs of ſociety with the poignancy ſhe had at firſt felt.

Melancholy is ſaid to have her pleaſures: Solitude has likewiſe her amuſements, and of a far more placid kind than thoſe to be found in the world: and can it

it be wondered at, whilſt mortals are ſo fertile at invention? nor is that reſource blunted or deſtroyed by the ſevereſt trials; for often, in the gloomy cells of a priſon, the wretched inhabitant has been found amuſing himſelf in tracing his own ſorrows from their ſource, and writing their hiſtory on the unconſcious walls by which he was encloſed.

Olivia never ſo much regretted her confinement as at thoſe moments when Mr. and Mrs. Goldwyn left her; and ſhe ſometimes began to think that Mr. Vane had determined that it ſhould not end but with her life.

Various had been the changes that Davenport had experienced. He had never ceaſed, however, to regret the ſufferings which his impetuous imprudence had brought upon Olivia. He was convinced that he ſtill loved her, and that the meeting which he falſely imagined would reſtore his mind to peace, had been attended with a contrary effect. The tears ſhe

ſhed,

ſhed, her gentle forgiveneſs of the injuries, which had occaſioned her ſo many hours regret, all dwelt upon his remembrance, and inceſſantly tormented him. Never before had he thought her ſo beautiful as ſhe appeared in the moments of this ſtolen interview. A viſible decline was the conſequence;—inſtead of living, he could merely be ſaid to breathe, and drag about an exiſtence, of which he was weary. Could he have eſcaped his own ſelf-reproaches, he would not have found his diſappointment ſo difficult to ſupport.

Lord Davenport was exceedingly alarmed at the ſituation he ſaw him in. Davenport was now his only ſon, for his other had fallen a victim to the irregularity of his own conduct; and having received ſome wounds from the ſword of a wretch with whom he diſputed at a gaming-table, the ſhattered ſtate of his conſtitution, and his own impatience under the torments he endured, ſoon ended a life of vice and debauchery; and he left few behind

hind him to regret his early exit, but many to lament that he had ever been permitted to diſgrace the name of man in a world in which he had been diſtinguiſhed for bringing ruin and diſgrace on numbers.

Lord Davenport, who was now rather advanced in life, was unable to ſupport the complicated diſtreſſes which attended his declining years. One ſon, on whom he had once fondly reſted his moſt ſanguine hopes, as being the future ſupport and honour of his ancient family, was already carried to the tomb of his anceſtors, and had brought upon himſelf a premature death—the other would ſoon follow, and that, he feared, by a heart broken with ſome ſecret grief;—perhaps, he himſelf had been the firſt cauſe of his diſtreſs, by forcing him ſo early into an engagement; his indifference to which had plainly ſhewn he had conſented to unwillingly. Not long, however, did Providence ſuffer him to labour under the

torments

torments of theſe ſelf-reproaches.—He died in a fit of apoplexy, after having dined with ſeveral of his friends, to appearance as well, and with more cheerfulneſs than uſual.

Our dejected Hero now took poſſeſſion of his father's title and eſtate, and ſincerely regretted his death; for Lord Davenport had long treated his ſon with ſo much tenderneſs and affection, as had entirely obliterated all the remembrance of that neglect which had thrown a gloom over his earlieſt days. The dowager Lady Davenport, on the death of her Lord, withdrew to his country-ſeat, and determined to end her days in retirement. The young Lady Davenport felt her happineſs conſiderably increaſed with her dignity; and on her firſt being addreſſed by her newly-acquired title, it was impoſſible not to obſerve the tranſports which the flattering ſound inſpired in her boſom.

The title which now belonged to her huſband had not, however, the ſame effect

on him, who by theſe complicated and additional trials, found himſelf growing worſe; and his phyſicians ſtrongly recommended his going to Bath, as thoſe ſalutary ſprings afforded the moſt probable means of reſtoring his declining health.

All places were alike to him, ſince in none could he be allowed to behold the dear object for whoſe ſociety he languiſhed; therefore, whether he was ſent to Bath, or to the unhoſpitable ſhores of Africa, was a matter of equal indifference to him.

Lady Davenport ſet about preparing for their excurſion to Bath with impatience, and determined, when there, to exhibit her perſon with every advantage her ſable dreſs would admit of, and to ſhew the world, ſhe knew as well how to ſupport her conſequence, as if ſhe had been accuſtomed to the ſound of a title from her birth.

She felt no alarms on account of her lord. The phyſicians had aſſured her,

they

they apprehended no immediate danger from the nature of his complaints; and as ſhe had never ſeen him in thoſe happy hours when he was as much diſtinguiſhed for the gaiety and conſtant cheerfulneſs of his diſpoſition, as he was now remarkable for the contrary, ſhe concluded he had always been ſubject to low ſpirits, which the death of his father had at this time increaſed: nor did ſhe now ever expect he would be able to conquer a humour, that was from uſe, ſhe ſuppoſed, become habitual.—We will now leave them preparing for Bath, and return to Olivia.

No variety marked her hours: the ſame to-day, to-morrow, and the next. The ſeaſons changed; but no change did they produce in her ſituation. Hope had now almoſt forſaken the manſion, in which the gladſome ſound of joy or ſocial mirth was never heard. A melancholy ſilence prevailed in every part of the houſe, except the kitchen; the inhabitants of which had long been tired of their ſecluſion:

but ſo much were they attached to their ſuffering miſtreſs, they could not prevail upon themſelves to leave her.

Poor Olivia, deprived of the ſociety of friends, endeavoured to find ſome relief from the forming a ſort of acquaintance with the animal world. She lamented the captivity of her favourite birds; but as ſhe knew their long continued loſs of liberty had rendered them incapable of providing themſelves with the neceſſaries of life if ſhe granted them freedom, ſhe contrived numberleſs little ſtratagems to make their impriſonment leſs painful. She permitted them to ſit upon her ſhoulder, and even ſteal the crumbs of bread from her roſy lips.

She had reſcued an innocent lamb from the uplifted knife of an unfeeling butcher; and the grateful creature repaid its preſerver by a thouſand innocent gambols: ſhe had decorated its neck with a ribbon; and it generally accompanied her in all her ſolitary rambles.

Two

Two turtle-doves had likewiſe at this time particularly engaged her attention, and awakened her tendereſt compaſſion. The lover, unable to ſupport the heavy burthen of confinement, and unmoved by the fond attention of his companion, had ſickened, pined, and died. The diſconſolate ſurvivor, with the moſt plaintive lamentations, diſcovered her unceaſing grief. Olivia imagined a ſimilarity between her own ſituation and that of the poor widowed dove: ſhe uſed her utmoſt endeavours to afford conſolation to the feathered mourner, but her attempts were all fruitleſs and unavailing; a few days only ſhe ſurvived her mate: and Olivia envied the ſpeedy releaſe which the turtle had found in death.

Every evening, when the weather was fine, ſhe wandered ſome hours in her garden. The ſweets of an approaching ſpring now promiſed a delightful increaſe to her limited enjoyments. The appearance of every flower was joyfully ob-

ſerved, and gratefully welcomed. The ſhrubs ſhe had planted with her own hands at the commencement of her confinement, ſhe beheld with a kind of maternal tenderneſs; and the friendly ſhade they afforded her was more grateful than any other: it was a kind of ſhelter ſhe had formed for herſelf againſt the ſtorms of an inclement world.

The following letter, however, for ſometime put an end to her ſolitary amuſements:

To Mrs. Vane.

Come to me, my Olivia. The bearer of this letter will conduct you to a huſband who was flying to your arms with all the impatience of love, and eager to obtain your forgiveneſs, when his progreſs was ſtopped, and his anxiety to ſee you increaſed by a violent indiſpoſition, which for the preſent prevents his travelling farther.

ther. Dear Olivia, let my ſituation plead my excuſe for this ſudden and unexpected ſummons. Forget your injuries, and haſten, my gentle love, to the arms of your repentant, fond, and faithful huſband,

HENRY VANE.

Mrs. Vane, ſurprized and extremely affected at the receipt of this aſtoniſhing epiſtle, ordered the meſſenger into the parlour. He was a middle-aged man, of a ſerious and reſpectable appearance. He ſaid, Mr. Vane had been juſt able to reach his houſe before he was ſeized with a fever; and if he was diſappointed of ſeeing her immediately, it would, he greatly feared, put an end to his life; ſo very impatient was he to have her with him. He added, that his family had many years occupied a farm in M***ſhire, which belonged to Mr. Vane's father; and that the young 'ſquire had offered to renew his

leaſe; but having met with one that ſuited him better, he declined his honour's propoſal, and now lived in B***ſhire. Olivia made a thouſand enquiries after the ſituation of her huſband: to all which ſhe received alarming anſwers, united with the moſt earneſt intreaties to ſet off immediately. He ſaid, Mr. Vane had particularly deſired that no one might be made acquainted with his arrival in England, till he had himſelf the happineſs of conveying her back again to Vane-Grove. Mrs. Vane had no friend whom ſhe could conſult; no one that ſhe could, after ſuch an injunction, requeſt to accompany her. Trembling with apprehenſion for the life of her huſband, and eager to obtain a reconciliation, for which her heart had ſo often ſighed, ſhe heſitated no longer; but, after packing up a few of her cloaths, ſet off the next morning for B***ſhire, attended only by the ſtranger. He had told her it was upwards of ninety miles to his houſe, and adviſed her to provide proper refreſh-

refreſhments, that they might be under the neceſſity of ſtopping as ſeldom, and as ſhort a time as poſſible upon the road, Mr. Vane having repeatedly declared he could not ſurvive the diſappointment of not ſeeing her before the next evening.

For the firſt fifty miles Mrs. Vane found her companion cheerful and attentive to her; but afterwards he ſat by her without attempting to enter into converſation, and complaining of extreme wearineſs, either was, or pretended to be, aſleep the greateſt part of the time he was in the chaiſe. They reſted a few hours, one night, at a little village upon the road; and the following morning ſet off again very early. Mrs. Vane was extremely anxious to arrive at the end of her journey; and feeling herſelf fatigued, repeatedly enquired how much farther they had to travel. The man deſired her, rather roughly at laſt, not to be too impatient, leſt ſhe found herſelf diſappointed. Mrs. Vane, ſuppoſing he alluded to the dan-

gerous ſtate in which he had left her huſband, felt only increaſing alarms on his account, and determined to keep her anxiety and impatience confined to her own boſom. The whole face of the country being new to her, ſhe endeavoured to find ſome amuſement in obſerving the variety of objects which preſented themſelves to her view. Tedious, however, and ſlow did the moments paſs; and, unuſed as ſhe was to travelling, ſhe was certain the diſtance was much greater than ſhe had been taught to expect. Late the next evening the carriage ſtopt at a little, mean-looking houſe, ſurrounded with hills, and ſo enveloped with trees, that it appeared ſecluded from all the reſt of the world. An elderly woman and a young one came to the door as ſoon as they heard the chaiſe drive up to it. The man handed his companion out, and in a voice harſh and rude, enquired if every thing was prepared as he had ordered? to which an anſwer was given in the affirmative:

ative: and Olivia, trembling with terrors, for which ſhe could not account, entered the gloomy hovel.

No ſooner had ſhe entered than ſhe eagerly requeſted they would ſhew her to Mr. Vane; after whom ſhe made the tendereſt enquiries. The young woman looked at her with the moſt compaſſionate ſurpriſe; the old one obſerved the moſt provoking ſilence—and Olivia, overcome with fatigue, terror, and aſtoniſhment, at this unaccountable reception, began, for the firſt time, to think all was not right. She threw herſelf into a chair, begged to have ſome water brought to her, and was beginning to aſk ſome further queſtions, when the man came in with her luggage, having waited abroad to diſcharge the chaiſe. "Conduct me, this inſtant, to Mr. Vane," cried the impatient Olivia. "Why am I kept a moment in ſuch agonizing ſuſpence?"—'Poor creature!' ſaid the young woman, 'how much I pity her!'—"What, is

he dead?" interrupted Mrs. Vane—"and am I brought to this horrid place to weep over the dead body of my beloved Henry? Did you ſuffer him to end his days in this dreadful ſolitude, without one kind friend to cloſe his dying eyes—to receive his laſt ſigh—or ſhed the tender tear of compaſſion on his ſufferings?"—'Peace, fool,' muttered the man! 'See, how you have made her rave.' He then commanded the two women to withdraw; and preſented a letter to Olivia, which he deſired her to read with compoſure; telling her, the manner of her treatment, whilſt with them, depended upon herſelf; for that, if ſhe ſubmitted to her fate with patience, ſhe would fare the better for it; but, if ſhe attempted to eſcape——Mrs. Vane would hear no more; ſhe tore open the letter in a ſtate of mind almoſt bordering on diſtraction, and in the following lines read her ſentence.

MADAM,

MADAM,

In compliance with the commands of my maſter, you are now far removed from Vane-Grove. The people you are to reſide with think you are deprived of your ſenſes, and that it was occaſioned by a diſappointment in love. If you behave well they will treat you with humanity and tenderneſs: all attempts to diſſuade them from their belief, in regard to this honeſt deception, will be fruitleſs, becauſe contrary to their intereſt. You muſt yield to the will of him who has a right to diſpoſe of you as he pleaſes; and who could never be convinced your penitence was ſincere, whilſt he knew you were ſurrounded by all the bleſſings of affluence—bleſſings you had juſtly forfeited by your own imprudence, and having admitted viſitors at the Grove, contrary to thoſe orders given by Mr. Vane at his departure. The neceſſaries of life are to be allowed

allowed you, but nothing more. You muſt not preſume to write to any of your friends; it will be uſeleſs. Mr. Vane deſires you to have done with letter-writing till he is ſatisfied it will not be attended with miſchief: he has had enough of intrigue.

S. RANDAL.

Mrs. Vane was at this moment above making a ſingle complaint. The meanneſs that had been employed to trepan her into the ſnare; the injuſtice of Mr. Vane; the cruelty which he ſhewed by increaſing ſufferings, without a ſingle reaſon for ſo doing, filled her ſoul with indignation, and gave additional ſtrength to that fortitude which now roſe ſuperior to her trials; and ſhe inſtantly determined to ſubmit to the utmoſt malice of her enemies with unrepining reſignation. The luxuries of life ſhe had never been accuſtomed (ſave a very few months of her exiſtence) to enjoy. They had been no addition

addition to her happineſs; never vain of the beauties with which nature had adorned her perſon but when ſhe heard them admired by the delighted praiſes of that huſband who had now forgotten them: it was no mortification to live unſeen and unadmired. To ſolitude ſhe had been ſo long inured, that it had loſt its terrors. True, this was far more gloomy; but time, ſhe truſted, would reconcile her to the change. She could ſtill apply to her God for conſolation; his penetrating eye could diſcover her in the moſt remote corner of the globe, and his watchful care protect her from the ſnares and cruelty of the baſe and deſigning. To repine at, and contend with, the ſeverity of her fate would only ſerve to increaſe its rigour. There might, and ſhe doubted not but there would, come a time when her fame would be cleared from every unjuſt aſperſion; and to that moment ſhe determined to look forward with hope.

She

She told her companion that he might depend on her not giving him any trouble: it was now become immaterial to her in what corner of the world her miſeries were concealed; but ſhe requeſted that the woman might be permitted to return, that ſhe might retire to reſt. The man, who expected to find her unruly and violent in her reſentment, when ſhe found herſelf ſo much deceived, readily complied with her deſire. He commended her ſweetneſs and reſignation, and promiſed to do all in his power to make his cottage agreeable.

The two women made their appearance, and ſeemed to look at her with a mixture of fear and tenderneſs. This did not eſcape the obſervation of Olivia; but ſhe determined never to attempt making them diſbelieve the tale they had heard of her inſanity, till time ſhould convince them they had been, like herſelf, deceived.

The next morning Olivia aroſe with a greater

greater degree of compoſure than ſhe had when ſhe retired to reſt. She took a view of the country from her little caſement, which admitted a ſmall portion of light, juſt ſufficient to diſcover the meanneſs of her room, and found, notwithſtanding the gloomineſs of its appearance the preceding evening, that ſhe was, even in this ſtrange place, ſurrounded with a thouſand beauties, which uncultivated nature preſents to the careful and curious obſerver. Her apartment, 'tis true, was mean, but it was perfectly neat. Reſt had viſited her pillow: it had not always done ſo in more ſplendid apartments. Sorrow was the portion Heaven had choſen to beſtow on her, and ſhe would endeavour to ſubmit. A few days more fully reconciled Olivia to her ſurpriſing change of ſituation. She found the people with whom ſhe was placed harmleſs, undeſigning, and obliging: they were poor, and therefore eaſily prevailed upon to take the charge of Olivia, without ſuppoſing (the

women

women I mean) that they were guilty of any injuſtice in doing ſo; and had they even ſuſpected it, ſo deſpotically did Farmer Roberts rule in his little family, one word from him would, at any time, have been ſufficient to ſilence any ſecret admonition which either conſcience or pity might occaſionally give riſe to in their boſoms.

Olivia requeſted Mrs. Roberts to let her have ſome needle-work; as ſhe both wiſhed for employment, and to render herſelf uſeful to her and her numerous family, the poor woman having ſeven children, and no female ſervant. She made a number of caps and little ornaments for her favourite daughter, who was a pretty girl, of about ſeventeen, and ſo perfectly good-humoured, that Mrs. Vane very ſoon propoſed teaching her to read and write: advantages ſhe never had encouraged a ſingle hope of acquiring, as all kinds of learning, in the opinion of her father, were unneceſſary for women.

Phœbe

Phœbe Roberts was Olivia's companion whenever ſhe choſe to walk out; but ſtrict orders were given that they ſhould never attempt entering into converſation with any one, or give the leaſt account of their boarder, if enquiries were made after her: orders that appeared to Olivia totally needleſs, as they had no neighbour within a mile of their dwelling, and the perſons they ſaw poor day-labourers, who were too much engaged about procuring the neceſſaries of life, to trouble their heads about others concerns.

Phœbe ſoon became extremely attached to Mrs. Vane; her accompliſhments, the purity of her mind, her engaging manners, the ſweetneſs of her temper, taught this artleſs, uninformed ruſtic to love the amiable companion chance had thrown in her way; and convinced her that the people had deceived her father, by pretending ſhe had loſt her ſenſes: no proof of ſuch loſs, in any inſtance, had ſhe been able to diſcover, except the night of her arrival:

arrival: on the contrary, ſhe thought the ſweet lady had more ſenſe than any one ſhe had ever met with. Theſe ſentiments ſhe imparted to Olivia with that ſimple, honeſt unreſerve, which could not fail to render the attachment mutual.

Olivia made no attempt to write to any of her friends, as the cruel letter, ſaid to be written by the orders of Mr. Vane, had poſitively forbidden her doing ſo; but ſhe ſecretly ſighed, and wiſhed to know what ſome dear friends thought of her abſenting herſelf from the Grove; not doubting but a thouſand miſconſtructions were put upon her conduct, and many falſe reports fabricated upon the occaſion.

CHAP. XL.

An uncommon Viſitor.

ONE morning as Mrs. Vane, Mrs. Roberts, and Phœbe, were ſitting at work, they ſaw an old gentleman open the little gate which led to the door of the cottage. Oh! exclaimed Phœbe, if there is not the old necromancer! Well, I declare, I never expected he would have gone abroad any more. I proteſt he looks worſe than ever.—She flew, however, to open the door, made one of her beſt court'ſies, and uſhered him into the room. Olivia aroſe, but was inſtantly deſired by the ſtranger to be reſeated, as he wiſhed to give no diſturbance to any one. Mrs. Roberts entered immediately into converſation with him; whilſt his chief attention was employed in obſerving Olivia, who,

who, ſtruck with the ſingularity and ſtrangeneſs of his appearance, took every opportunity of ſtealing a look at him.

He was dreſt in an old black gown, which hung over an embroidered waiſt-coat; his ſhoes without any buckles, his ſtockings looſe, his long hair twiſted together, and placed under his arm; which, for want of combing, looked more like a rocket of tow than hair. He ſpoke ſlow, but with an emphaſis and energy that was uncommon and ſtriking; ſtaid about half an hour; promiſed to call the next day; ſhook Phœbe by the hand, and withdrew. Goodneſs! ſaid the delighted Phœbe, I am quite rejoiced to ſee Mr. Mornington look ſo well again. I am glad he has got rid of the blue devils, as he calls them; for he is monſtrouſly entertaining when he is well, and in the humour to talk. I don't believe, if he is a conjuror, as the people ſay he is, that he does any harm.

Mrs. Vane, wiſhing to hear ſome account of this new viſitor, enquired of

Mrs.

Mrs. Roberts who he was? All I know of him, Madam, replied her good-natured hoſteſs, is, that he came to this place about thirteen or fourteen years ago, hired rooms of the town's people in part of an old building next the church, which had not been inhabited many years, becauſe it ſeems they were haunted; and 'tis ſaid, uncommon noiſes have been heard, and a number of lights ſeen flying about ſince he lived there: but he does not regard them, and therefore people think, belike, he is a conjurer himſelf; for he is ſometimes walking about all night, and minds no more going through the church-yard when the clock ſtrikes at midnight, than I do going about the houſe when the ſun ſhines. An old woman came with him to this place, and has lived with him ever ſince: ſhe keeps nine or ten cats.—Then I preſume, cried Olivia, laughing, ſhe is imagined to be a witch; no improper companion for a conjuror. Why, to be ſure, ſtrange ſtories are told of them,

replied

replied Mrs. Roberts; for they never go to church, and no one dares venture to go into their houſe: but the old gentleman has a power of money, and when he will walk about, he relieves all that are ſick, threatens all that are wicked with every thing terrible; and yet ſome are ſo full hardy as to ſay, he has not neceſſaries to ſupply nature, but what he gets by the black art. He has been very good to Phœbe, and has given her ſeveral books; but her father would not let her keep them.—Mrs. Vane enquired if they could not procure her a ſight of them. After ſearching a few minutes, they were produced; and proved to be a bible, prayer-book, and the Oeconomy of Human Life. Olivia, convinced from the choice of the books preſented to her young friend, that the giver of them could have no ill deſigns againſt her, but appeared to poſſeſs both principle, religion, and reflection, was impatient for the time appointed to repeat his viſit; concluding, he muſt be

driven

driven into this recluſe way of living by ſome unavoidable misfortunes; his converſation and addreſs being thoſe of a gentleman not unacquainted with the cuſtoms and manners of polite life.

The next evening, as Mrs. Roberts was driving home her cow, ſhe was overtaken by Mr. Mornington, who had not ſo far outlived all his curioſity as not to make ſome enquiries after the young lady he had ſeen with her the preceding day. The good woman, who was much attached to him for the attention he had ſhewn her daughter, inſtantly told him all ſhe had been able to diſcover reſpecting Olivia; her being crazed for love, and ſent to them to be taken care of, in order to be kept out of bad people's way; of her having raved terribly the firſt night ſhe arrived, but had been pure peaceable and good-humoured ever ſince; adding, ſhe took on ſadly at times about the cruelty of a Mr. Vane: but as they were pretty well paid for the care of her,

why, Tom Roberts ſaid, it was no buſineſs of theirs; and had charged them never to aſk any queſtions; and therefore ſhe muſt beg he would not ſay a word to her huſband, that ſhe had mentioned any thing about the lady to him. He bowed aſſent, and haſtened to the houſe to ſee again the fair, but unfortunate object, who had ſo unuſually excited his curioſity; and whoſe ſituation and hiſtory claimed his utmoſt compaſſion. Olivia, equally intereſted, and, on her part, guided by the ſame divine philanthropy, very ſoon entered into converſation with the venerable ſtranger; who, when he left the houſe, was firmly perſuaded *loſs* of *reaſon* was not amongſt the number of *reaſons* that had occaſioned her being an inhabitant in that retired corner of the world.

Farmer Roberts's buſineſs generally kept him abroad the greateſt part of the day. Mr. Mornington's inclination, more frequently than ever, led him from his own

own houſe to that of Roberts's. The more he ſaw and converſed with Olivia, the better he liked her: mutually pleaſed with each other, unreſerve led the way to friendſhip. Olivia diſcovered that a number of diſappointments had driven her venerable companion from the cheerful haunts of men, and ſoured with diſguſt a temper naturally ſweet and unſuſpicious. Amongſt the number of his misfortunes, the loſs of a favourite brother ſtood foremoſt, who, in the early part of his life had fled from his family, and was never heard of after; though to have ſeen and forgiven him for having married imprudently, after ſpending the greateſt part of his fortune, had been the earneſt wiſh of his dying father. He acknowledged that his family, from being one of the firſt and moſt opulent, was almoſt reduced and forgotten; he being the only ſurvivor, the laſt that had lived to ſee the wreck of

what had once been great, powerful, and reſpectable. He had never married, being deprived by death of the woman he loved, a few days before their nuptials ſhould have been celebrated

CHAP.

CHAP. XLI.

Mutual Confidence rewarded, by giving Birth to ſome pleaſant Hopes.

MRS. Vane made Mr. Mornington acquainted with the moſt ſtriking paſſages of her life, amongſt which ſhe mentioned the ſtrange circumſtance of her grandfather's pride and obſtinacy, in concealing his name and family, even from his only ſon. Mr. Mornington eagerly enquired if ſhe had no picture, no trinket of her grandfather's, that could lead to a diſcovery. She replied, that ſhe had a miniature picture of him, which ſhe had preſerved with the greateſt care; and had been repeatedly informed it was a moſt ſtriking likeneſs. The time that this had happened, and the

circumſtances, ſtruck Mr. Mornington. Who knows, cried the old gentleman, but you may be the grand-daughter of that brother, whoſe death I have ſo long lamented, and whoſe ſituation I ſo often ſighed to be made acquainted with. Should I find you ſo!—But where is the picture? You have raiſed hopes I am eager to have realized. Mrs. Vane had left it at the Grove; but promiſed, if ever ſhe was permitted to return to her own houſe, ſhe would ſend a meſſenger with it. Agitated and delighted, Mr. Mornington was already half-convinced, from his own feelings, that matters would turn out, when an explanation took place, as he could wiſh; and aſſured her, ſhe would have no reaſon to repent the confidence ſhe had repoſed in him. Though not very rich, he continued, I have ſome jewels and other valuables remaining, that will ſerve to convince your huſband he has married the deſcendant of a family ſuperior to his own. Every ſucceeding inter-

interview ſerved to ſtrengthen an attachment which had ſo unaccountably taken place, and made Mr. Mornington anxious to have Olivia's ſituation diſcovered to her friends, that his ſuſpence reſpecting their conſanguinity might be ended; at the ſame time aſſuring her, the loſs of her ſociety would be conſidered by him as a heavy misfortune: but declared, whether ſhe was related to him by the ties of blood or not, ſhe ſhould aſſuredly be the child of his adoption.

He likewiſe inſiſted on her having better accomodations at the cottage; and did not find it very difficult to prevail on Roberts to receive preſents for that purpoſe, he being very poor, having only a ſmall quantity of land, which Randal had enabled him to hire, in order to ſerve his own purpoſe. Happy was it for Olivia that this alteration in her manner of living took place; as the coarſe fare ſhe had been obliged to put up with for near two months, would have been refuſed by

the moſt menial ſervants in her own family. Her wardrobe too, was but ill ſupplied: ſhe had brought ſo few cloaths with her, that the contents of her purſe was nearly exhauſted in buying neceſſaries: but ſhe was determined to make no application to Randal on that ſubject, till reduced to the unavoidable neceſſity of doing ſo; yet ſhe ſometimes reproached herſelf for blaming Randal. No doubt but he treated her as Mr. Vane directed him. She had ſome friends who would generouſly ſupply her wants if they were acquainted how cruelly ſhe was circumſtanced; but it would more fully expoſe the injuſtice of her huſband to inform them of her wretched ſituation. It would likewiſe deprive her of the ſweet conſolation of having ſubmitted to her fate, without murmuring againſt the cauſe of her ſufferings; and by ſo doing, had kept her mind at peace with itſelf.

But ah! could he, could that once tender lover, whom ſhe now called huſband,

band, have ſeen the blooming Olivia meanly and thinly cloathed, expoſed to the chilling damps and cold of an unwholeſome air, in a mean cottage, that ſhook with every guſt of wind, ſitting down to the moſt homely fare, with uncomplaining reſignation, it would have given a wound to his peace no time could ever again have cloſed! But what ſhe found more difficult to ſupport without repining than even her own wants, was, the not having a ſhilling to give the poor wretches, of whoſe diſtreſſes ſhe had in ſome degree partaken, and to whoſe miſeries ſhe had been an unwilling witneſs.

CHAP. XLII.

An Agreeable Surpriſe.

ONE morning, juſt as Mrs. Vane was preparing to go down to breakfaſt with Roberts and his family, ſhe heard a little buſtle in the yard, which drew her to the window; when the firſt perſon ſhe beheld was Mr. Goldwyn getting out of a poſt-chaiſe, and followed by Mr. Beevor. Mrs. Vane flew down ſtairs, and, in a moment, was in the protecting arms of her beloved Mr. Goldwyn. Their mutual delight and agitation was, for ſome moments, too great to be expreſſed in words. The ſweet ſufferer held out her trembling hand to Mr. Beevor; and when the torrent of joy had in ſome degree ſubſided, ſhe eagerly enquired how they had diſcovered the place in which ſhe was concealed?—

cealed?——Reſtrain your curioſity, my child, replied Mr. Goldwyn, till you are more compoſed (leading her into the houſe): theſe people, I ſuppoſe, can provide us with ſomething for breakfaſt: we really ſtand in need of refreſhment after our long journey. Mrs. Roberts was called; and the beſt entertainment the houſe afforded was ſet before them. Olivia, ſeated between theſe her friends, found this one of the happieſt moments of her life. This is ſo great, ſo unexpected a pleaſure, ſhe exclaimed, I know not how to ſupport it as I ought! Every flattering hope is revived in my care-worn boſom, and all my ſorrows baniſhed! The two gentlemen looked at the guiltleſs ſufferer, then at the miſerable hovel they found her in, whilſt the viſible change in her perſon and appearance ſtruck them with horror. The indignation that filled their hearts tinged their cheeks; and it was with great difficulty they impoſed ſilence on themſelves. The breakfaſt was

no ſooner over, than Mr. Goldwyn informed Olivia, ſhe was indebted to the unceaſing friendſhip, anxiety, and vigilence of Mr. Beevor for the diſcovery they had made of her ſituation, whom he inſiſted ſhould be his own hiſtorian. Mr. Beevor modeſtly acquieſced.

"When I firſt heard of your having left the Grove, Madam, I was convinced your abſence muſt have been occaſioned by circumſtances very uncommon. I called and examined your ſervants; all I could learn of them was, that you had ordered a chaiſe; and, accompanied by a ſtranger of rather mean and ſuſpicious appearance, had left your houſe, much agitated. I then applied to Randal for an explanation; but he pretended to be totally ignorant of your flight, and threw out hints, that he fancied you had other company waiting to receive you on the road; ſaying, he meant to inform Mr. Vane of your elopement the earlieſt opportunity. I left the wretch with diſguſt, but not with-

without telling him, I imagined he knew more of this matter then he found it convenient to acknowledge. I then paid a viſit to this your worthy friend, and we agreed to wait the event in ſilence, concluding the more buſtle we made, the greater care would be taken to prevent a diſcovery. In juſtice, I muſt inform you, Madam, you had other friends equally anxious for your preſervation: Sir Robert and Lady Clifton, Lord ——" Enough, cried the bluſhing Olivia: I owe much gratitude to Heaven for raiſing me up ſuch kind friends in the hour of perſecution and diſtreſs; but pray proceed. "I called frequently upon Randal, continued Mr. Beevor, and ſecretly made every enquiry that could tend to find out your ſituation: vain were all my endeavours: at length an accident unfolded what my utmoſt efforts could not accompliſh:—Randal fell from his horſe, and broke his leg in ſo dangerous a manner, that the ſurgeon who was ſent for, pronounced

nounced the dreadful ſentence of amputation: then it was the poor unhappy man, I preſume, began to feel repentance for his conduct towards you, and conſidered this misfortune as a judgment ſent to puniſh his injuſtice. Nothing would ſatisfy him but my being ſent for. I went, examined the fractured limb, and declared it my opinion, that it might be ſaved without his life being endangered. Tranſported at my differing in opinion from the other ſurgeon, he reſolutely declared he would put his life into my care, and that no other ſhould direct the proceſs. This I as reſolutely oppoſed, and, requeſting the people to leave me a few minutes alone with my patient, I told him that, unleſs he would inform me what was become of you, Madam, and why you had been ſent from your houſe, I would inſtantly leave him, and return no more to his aſſiſtance. Guilt, pain, ſhame, and remorſe threw him into agonies; but after having argued, ſoothed,

ſoothed, and threatened, he reluctantly told me, that if I would promiſe you ſhould never betray this infamous part of his conduct to the world, he would inform me of the whole tranſaction. I promiſed; and he related, with agonizing contrition, That finding Mr. Vane was determined on continuing abroad, he had baſely contrived, by forging Mr. Vane's hand-writing, to ſend you from the Grove, in order to appropriate the income allowed you to his own private uſe; and not doubting, but when he heard of your elopement, it would confirm him in the reſolution of no more returning to England. He had cheriſhed hopes of accumulating a large fortune to himſelf, by having the management of Mr. Vane's eſtates thrown wholly into his power; adding, that he had not yet been able to acquire ſufficient courage to write to his patron an account of your abſence from the Grove. Repentance, and a fear of being diſcovered, had followed ſo quick

on

on the ſteps of guilt, as had deprived him of the power to write. The poor man, who was his aſſiſtant in this diabolical ſtratagem, he exculpated from all blame; ſaid he was a diſtant relation, whom poverty and neceſſity had rendered ſubſervient to his purpoſes.

"After I had performed my duty as a ſurgeon, and attended him till all danger was over, I ſent for Mr. Goldwyn; and we hurried to this place, in order to eſcort you in ſafety to Vane-Grove. You have now nothing to fear from any farther deſigns of Randal. Your ſalary is to be regularly paid you, and all deficiencies made good on the day you return to your own houſe."

Therefore, my child, added Mr. Goldwyn, ſet about packing up as quick as poſſible, that we may liberate you from one place of confinement, and convey you to another. A tear ſtrayed down his venerable cheek at that unpleaſant recollection.

Olivia,

Olivia, after making the moſt grateful acknowledgments to her two friends, prepared for her departure, for which little preparation was neceſſary; and the being convinced that Mr. Vane had no hand in ſending her from the Grove, removed a heavy weight of miſery from her boſom, becauſe it leſſened his injuſtice. She informed Mr. Goldwyn of her meeting Mr. Mornington, and of the hopes ſhe cheriſhed, that through him ſhe ſhould be able to diſcover her father's family. A meſſenger was inſtantly diſpatched to requeſt his company at the Cottage. He came; and after being ſome time ſhut up with Mr. Goldwyn, he took his leave of Olivia, with a firm perſuaſion that ſhe was indeed the daughter of that loſt brother whom he had ſo long lamented, every circumſtance tending to corroborate his hopes. The picture was to be ſent him as ſoon as Mrs. Vane arrived at the Grove; and he promiſed, if he found ſhe was his niece (as Nature had already almoſt

moſt convinced him by her powerful feelings) he would ſo far conquer his repugnance to again mixing with ſociety, as to pay her a viſit as ſoon as a reunion had taken place between her and her huſband.

Olivia borrowed a few guineas of her friends, which ſhe preſented to Mrs. Roberts; who lamented parting with her boarder with many tears. She likewiſe forgave her worthleſs huſband the part he had acted; but he received ſome very ſevere admonitions from the two gentlemen, to be more cautious how he behaved in future, leſt he met with puniſhment inſtead of pardon; adviſing him never again to let neceſſity lead him to become the aſſociate with guilt.

By the conſent of Mr. Goldwyn, Mrs. Vane prevailed upon Mrs. Roberts to let her take her eldeſt daughter home with her, the poor girl having earneſtly ſolicited to have the honour of being her maid;

maid; declaring ſhe never ſhould be happy if her requeſt was not granted. This matter was eaſily managed with her parents. The happy party in a few hours left the village, and arrived without any accident at Vane-Grove.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIII.

In which Olivia is convinced ſhe knew not the Value of ſome Bleſſings ſhe had enjoyed, till ſhe found herſelf deprived of them.

NEVER was greater joy expreſſed, than by the ſervants, when they welcomed their miſtreſs to her long-forſaken home. Mrs. Vane received letters of congratulation from Lady Clifton and Mrs. Goldwyn, to whom alone had been imparted the cauſe of her involuntary abſence. Mr. Beevor ſettled Mr. Vane's affairs with Randal, who now declined interfering reſpecting the conduct of the fair recluſe, and offered to ſolicit Mr. Vane for any additional indulgences that Mrs. Vane might require. This ſhe prudently rejected; and before ſhe parted with

with Mr. Goldwyn, told him, it was her intention to make no alteration in her manner of living, till her huſband himſelf ſhould requeſt her to act otherwiſe. Mr. Goldwyn commended her reſolution; ſaid every thing in his power to ſtrengthen it; and cautioned her not to let any ſtratagem decoy her from the peaceful aſylum, to which ſhe was returned in ſafety: and he had the ſatisfaction of leaving her more compoſed, and much happier, than he had ever done ſince her becoming a widowed wife. To Mr. Goldwyn ſhe entruſted the picture promiſed to be ſent to Mr. Mornington: at the moment of doing ſo, it brought to her remembrance a ſimilar requeſt, which ſhe had made on a former occaſion; and ſhe ſecretly breathed a wiſh, that the picture ſhe now gave him might not prove the ſource of future ſorrow.

The miſery, both of body and mind, the mortifying inconveniences, the humiliating diſtreſſes, which Olivia had ſeen

and

and partaken at the Cottage, gave her redoubled reliſh to enjoy the bleſſings again reſtored to her. Mr. Beevor frequently called at the Grove; his amiable wife contrived to meet her, when ſhe walked in the park or plantations, and ſaid every thing in her power to enliven her ſpirits. Phœbe Roberts was a ſoothing and ſympathizing companion in her hours of ſecluſion. Hope gleamed through the ſtill-hovering cloud of deſpair, and cheerfulneſs would ſometimes ſteal into her boſom. She now followed all her former amuſements with additional ſatisfaction.—At this time ſhe received the following letter from the Friendly Spy, whom ſhe began to fear, from the length of his ſilence, would write to her no more.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

To Mrs. Vane.

IN a former letter, Madam, I ſent you the hiſtory of an amiable, but unfortunate ſiſter. I will now ſend you my own; which, if it does not prove equally intereſting, will, I truſt, ſerve to convince you that none, or very few, eſcape without meeting their allotted portion of affliction.

We court happineſs in ten thouſand different purſuits, and various ſhapes; but the airy phantom eludes our graſp, and deceives our high-raiſed expectations. We then complain of the cruelty and injuſtice of Heaven, for inſpiring us with hopes that are only formed for their own diſappointment. Alas! the ſource of our complaints firſt take riſe from the frailty of our own diſſatisfied hearts, which lead

our

our vain wiſhes to ſoar above the reality of our enjoyments. Therefore, when we have attained that which we earneſtly deſired, we repine and murmur at diſcovering, it doth not bring with it the train of delights we fooliſhly expected.—I have been myſelf, by indiſputable experience, long convinced of this important truth.

When I firſt ſet out in life, I laboured under all the diſadvantages of a very limited fortune. I belonged to a family unmarked with honours or diſtinction, and without ever having had an opportunity of forming a connection with perſons who had it in their power to ſerve me in the profeſſion to which I had been brought up.

I likewiſe imprudently married, before I was old enough to reflect on the hardſhips and difficulties a man muſt encounter, encumbered with a family, and nearly allied to indigence. However, I was ſoon let into a diſcovery of my miſtake, by the pungency of thoſe feelings which the nature

nature of ſuch ſituations muſt produce in every thinking mind.

I loved my unfortunate partner in affliction with a fervency and tenderneſs, if not unexampled, yet not often to be found with poverty and deſpondency; and the ſincerity of my attachment ſerved to increaſe my regret. I now imagined that happineſs reſided only in the habitations of affluence. Overlooked, ſlighted, calumniated, and treated with unremitting contempt, my ſoul was rendered callous, for a time, to all the fine feelings of that generous philanthropy which reflects ſo much honour on human nature. I ſighed to be of that conſequence, the poſſeſſion of which I had been taught to envy in others; and ſo eager was I to be in favour with that fickle dame, called Fortune, that diſcontent prevented my enjoying the few comforts I might otherwiſe have known.

The beauty of my wife inſenſibly loſt its power to charm; and my churliſhneſs

was at times ſo great, as to be even diſguſted with the patient humility and gentle ſweetneſs, which had never been loſt in ſufferings equal with my own.

But the ill-natured remarks, the ſupercilious ſneers, the inſulting inſolence of muſhroom-pride, planted thorns around my pillow to diſturb my repoſe; whilſt the heart-wounding thought of leaving my children to experience the ſame cutting mortifications, prevented my feeling any ſatisfaction at being a father; and I ſecretly repined at being the cauſe of introducing ſo many innocent but helpleſs beings into a world of injuſtice and cruelty.

Many a time have I been in a room full of company, where I have ſat till I imagined myſelf become inviſible to the party; ſo totally regardleſs were they of a man, whoſe indigence, by being known, was a cloak of oblivion to every merit and good quality he poſſeſſed. Though honeſt, and not without either honour or integrity, ſtill I was poor. In public I very ſeldom

ventured

ventured to pay my reſpects to a ſuperior, leſt he ſhould be too ſhort-ſighted to know me, or, what was worſe, return my reſpectful attention with a ſneer of mortifying contempt.

During all my years of probationary poverty, ſo great was my diffidence, I never but twice was caught in the unpardonable crime of ſaying a *good thing*.— Then, one of the company enquired, with the moſt provoking *ſang froid*, what the poor man meant by his witticiſms? and concluded with wondering that ſuch kind of people ſhould be ſo eager to mix with their ſuperiors! The ſame ill-fated moment deprived me of the friendſhip of almoſt the only family I had ventured to think ſincere in their attachment; — and they alſo ſo ſlighted my innoffenſive wife, that ſhe gave me a hint, never again to think of ſhewing my underſtanding in public. Indeed I never, for ſome years after, preſumed to have an opinion of my own; and if I even pretended to know

any thing of the moſt unintereſting nature, I have been immediately reminded, that people in my ſituation could not poſſibly be acquainted with ſuch matters as had been diſcuſſed. But, what was ſtill more inſupportable, people would not allow me to have any knowledge in my profeſſion, though many of them at that moment were indebted to my care for the firſt of human bleſſings.

Amidſt this ſcene of dejected humiliation, a genteel fortune unexpectedly devolved to me, by the death of one of my wife's relations. Gracious God!—that different ſituations ſhould diſcover ſuch ſudden revolutions in people's opinions!—I was inſtantly pronounced a ſecond Solomon;—and none could think of putting themſelves under the care of any one but Mr. ———. I can now talk nonſenſe, and have it admired; and had not my own long acquaintance with misfortune convinced me, beyond a doubt, of the inſincerity of mankind in general, I ſhould be ſo far intoxicated with vanity,

as

as to imagine myſelf a prodigy. To have a man's frailties applauded—is ſufficient to deprive him of his reaſon, his humility, and even his honeſty.

I am now likewiſe convinced, by that beſt of leſſons, experience, that riches, that moſt envied of all mortal poſſeſſions, have their attendant cares inſeparably connected with them; and that to flatter ourſelves with the hopes of uninterrupted happineſs in any ſituation, during our pilgrimage in this fluctuating world, is mere deluſion. To meet with as little diſcompoſure as the nature of our feelings will allow, and to reconcile ourſelves, without complaining, to the diſagreeable train of events it may be our lot to encounter, is wiſdom—'tis the utmoſt happineſs human nature is capable of enjoying, and muſt be acquired under the placid name of our beſt friend, Contentment.

Did the happineſs of man depend upon his poſſeſſions, many indeed muſt be un-

avoidably wretched: but it is far otherwiſe. The humble, unambitious mind of the real Chriſtian has few wants to gratify: He depends not upon the world for a ſupply to his enjoyments; and though far removed from the ſound of noiſy mirth, or the giddy voice of pleaſure, they are unacquainted with that genuine treaſure, which I have ventured to call the beſt friend of man, under the name of Contentment.

A FRIENDLY SPY.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIV.

Retroſpection, Fortitude, and Reſignation.

OLIVIA was delighted with the above letter; and, from the contents, fixed upon a perſon, in her own mind, as the undoubted writer of it; nor was ſhe miſtaken in her conjectures: but as ſhe imparted her ſentiments to no one, it would not be right to diſcover her thoughts till ſhe herſelf choſe to avow them.

She now took a retroſpective view of her ſituation, and began to ſuſpect ſhe had acted wrong, if not wickedly, in feeling ſuch unceaſing regret for what ſhe knew not but might be permitted, as a trial of her patience: and this letter was the means of introducing a thouſand various and pleaſing hopes. When the ſoul is depreſſed, and the woe-worn mind

ſinking into a habitual deſpondence, under the complicated union of fears and cares, whither can it retire for conſolation? Not to itſelf: for there all is too melancholy for hope to enter; there every thought partakes of its dejection.—From the world ſhe was baniſhed: But this letter convinced her, that the world was no antidote againſt misfortune, becauſe from the world, the writer's friendly epiſtle convinced her, many trying ſorrows had their ſource; and that even in the hour of anguiſh, the unfortunate could not eſcape its treachery. A perfect acquieſcence therefore with our own frail nature, muſt be the beſt preſervative againſt deſpair; and the hiſtory of another's life, a means to render us ſatisfied with our own. Books, ſhe concluded, and indeed had found, were the pleaſanteſt reſource. Without either flattery or falſe promiſes, they ſoothed the troubled ſoul of the patient ſufferer, who, from their intelligent leaves, could trace afflictions

ſlictions ſuperior to their own, and be encouraged by the triumph ſome have gained over miſery. The pages of philoſophy would lend their aid; and daily practice had already ſhewn her, that Religion was ever ready to pour its balm into the ſoul, whenever ſhe was applied to for her aſſiſtance.

To her library Olivia often flew for relief; and ſhe found the poiſon of deſpair expelled by the application. In contemplating the fortitude of others, ſhe felt its influence on herſelf.—In one of thoſe ſerene moments, which hope had marked with its brighteſt rays, ſhe wrote the following little Ode, and addreſſed it to the ſource of her ſerenity.

ODE to RESIGNATION.

WITH toil we Happineſs purſue,
Never poſſeſs'd, yet ſtill in view,
We think the prize to gain:
Each gay, deluſive pleaſure court,
To all life's various ſcenes reſort —
The ſearch, alas! how vain!

Though on the wheel of Fortune plac'd,
With beauty, honour, title grac'd,
And friends a num'rous train;
Depriv'd of health, our joys are fled,
The heart to each amuſement dead,
While hope is loſt in pain.

The world's a pilgrimage of care;
Each man has his allotted ſhare,
For ſome wiſe purpoſe giv'n.
To diſregard the rubs of life,
The taunts of envy, or of ſtrife,
Is wiſdom, ſure, from Heav'n.

The

The ſlave, when tugging at the oar,
His wretched fortune will deplore,
If hope withdraw its ray:
Whilſt he, who puts thoſe fetters on,
May with ſuperior anguiſh mourn,
And curſe each dawning day.

Falſe friends near rank and ſplendor dwell;
Nay, ſometimes haunt the humble cell
Of unaſſuming worth.
E'en he who toils to gain ſupport,
Some flatt'ring ſycophant will court,
If kept from higher earth.

Would mortals, with impartial eye,
The works of Nature's hand deſcry,
This truth they would obtain:
That Providence, with niceſt ſkill,
Divides the lots of good and ill,
Of pleaſure and of pain.

Beneath the ermin'd robes of ſtate,
Cares num'rous as attendants wait,
Peace for ambition pays:
The peaſant who to labour goes,
Enjoys more undiſturb'd repoſe
Than he who empire ſways.

Remote from pride, unknown to ill,
My wiſh to climb life's rugged hill,
With Reſignation bleſt.
Let others wear the gilded crown,
Compos'd I'd lay the burden down,
In hopes of endleſs reſt.

Olivia again reſumed her evening walks, an exerciſe ſhe was particularly fond of, in her days of peaceful freedom, when no rigid authority had limited her light and cheerful ſteps to the confines of one narrow ſpot. In her garden, however, Nature had been profuſely laviſh of her ſweets, and Art had not been employed in vain: Eden itſelf could not have preſented a more enchanting picture of delight.

But even to this amuſement ſhe received an interruption, by obſerving a man, who frequently came as if with the deſign of watching her ſteps: He was wrapt up in a ſhabby great coat, wore his hat ſo low over his eyes, that it was not poſſible to diſcover

diſcover his face: He ſometimes ſtood with his eyes bent on the earth, as if buried in the moſt profound meditation; the next moment would hurry from the ſpot, as if endeavouring to eſcape from perpetrating ſome terrible deſign he had been tempted to accompliſh. Olivia mentioned her ſurpriſe, and imparted her fears to Mr. Beevor, who, afraid of alarming her, made light of the man's behaviour; but adviſed her not to walk out unattended by one of her ſervants. Sometimes ſhe thought it might be the audacious Wilford, who meant to frighten her, by way of revenge. On finding, however, he made no attempt to diſturb or interrupt her, except by walking near her houſe, her fears ſubſided; and ſhe reſolutely determined, that no impertinent or curious obſerver ſhould deprive her of an amuſement ſo neceſſary to the preſervation or her health and ſpirits.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLV.

In which it is neceſſary to look back.

IT is now time to make ſome enquiries after Mr. Vane, with whom we have had but little intercourſe from the hour in which he departed from the Grove. Urged by an irreſiſtible impulſe of indignation, paſſion, and jealous phrenzy, and without ſuppoſing it poſſible for the parties to be guiltleſs, becauſe he himſelf imagined the contrary, he left his houſe in a ſtate the moſt ſavage heart would have been inclined to pity, and went to Randal; who, unfortunately for the unhappy Vane, was the only man in the world that would not have attempted to diſſuade him from his purpoſe.

After having fixed upon a plan for making ſuch remittances to Mrs. Vane as he-

he might have occaſion for, attended only by one ſervant, he hurried to London, where he remained no longer than to receive intelligence of Davenport's being pronounced out of danger from his wounds, before he prepared, with all the eagerneſs of indignant deſpair, to leave a kingdom, in which he falſely imagined himſelf to have been cruelly and irreparably injured. He ſoon arrived in Paris, that grand theatre of pleaſure and politeneſs, and very ſoon entered with avidity into every gaiety and extravagance to be found in that diſſipated city. But in none of its alluring and enchanting delights could he find that ſweet peace, that ineſtimable content, of which one unlooked-for unexpected hour had ſo cruelly deprived him. The image of Olivia accompanied him to every place; and though he wiſhed to forget her, love was too faithfully attached to his injured favourite, ever to deſert her cauſe. Hymen too, introduced ſome reproaches, of having

having his rights inſulted by Jealouſy; and a ſecret remorſe attended thoſe ſilent admoniſhers. But jealouſy, of all the paſſions baneful to the peace of mortals, is the hardeſt to conquer, and its effects the moſt difficult to be eradicated. Like a guilty conſcience, it allows no reſpite to the unfortunate wretch over whom it gains an aſcendant. It is painful alike in all kingdoms, and throws a ſhade of impenetrable darkneſs over every enjoyment. With jealouſy no peace can dwell, or joy inhabit. In every part of the globe it is to its unfortunate victims the grand enemy of happineſs.

Long did Vane reſolutely perſiſt in endeavours to recover, in the gaieties and pleaſure of the great world, the peace he had, perhaps by his own impatient impetuoſity, forſaken and loſt. After one doubt aroſe of not having acted right, it was followed by many others; and he began to take a retroſpective view of his own conduct with regret. He frequently

received

received letters from England. Olivia's conduct was ſuch, that even Randal, the unfeeling Randal, durſt not preſume to cenſure. Her patient ſweetneſs, her reſolute obedience, her unrepining ſufferings, had created her many friends amongſt her ſurrounding neighbours; and Randal had, though unwillingly, been prevailed upon to ſend two letters to his patron, written by unknown friends, in behalf of the injured Olivia; in which a long and intereſting account of her conduct ſince his departure, was warmly and impartially deſcribed, and her innocence reſolutely aſſerted, reſpecting her unintentional meeting with Davenport.

Theſe letters made a very ſtriking impreſſion on the mind of Vane, already in part ſelf-convicted. He began to think, notwithſtanding every alarming appearance, that it was poſſible for him to have acted wrong; and he would have given the world, had it been at his diſpoſal, to have recalled that hour in which the diſ-

tracted

tracted Olivia ſo earneſtly intreated him to grant her an interview.

Many months after this he remained in a ſtate of irreſolute wretchedneſs. He wiſhed to return—but to reſide in England, without being reconciled to his wife, would be impoſſible. If ſhe was innocent, would ſhe ever again conſent to live with a man by whom ſhe had been ſo cruelly aſperſed, ſuſpected, and injured? Davenport had loved her long, ſincerely loved her. He had been prevailed upon to ſacrifice that love to the ambitious views of his father. On the contrary, though Olivia might once feel a partiality in favour of his rival, ſhe had cheerfully conſented, and voluntarily accompanied him to the altar. What right then had he to doubt the honour of his wife, becauſe Davenport was ſtill a captive to her charms! he trembled, and wiſhed to fly the ſeverity of his own calm, impaſſioned reflections.

France was no longer ſupportable.—

He

He therefore returned to England, in much the ſame conflicting ſtate of mind as he had before left it, to ſeek a ſhelter from care in the boſom of France. He very unexpectedly arrived at the houſe of the deſigning Randal, by whom he was welcomed with the ſmiles of affected joy and well-acted deceit.

He, however, reſolutely determined to remain concealed, till ſome fortunate moment ſhould arrive that would afford him the opportunity, for which his ſoul now eagerly longed, of again beholding Olivia—the firſt, the laſt, the only object of his fondeſt love. He had not in the paroxyiſm of his unhappy jealouſy been more ready to conclude her guilty than he was now to believe her innocent. Such the variable changes performed in the minds of men when they ſuffer themſelves to be governed by the impulſe of the preſent moment, or tamely ſubmit to the impetuous guidance of thoſe wayward and arbitrary paſſions which reaſon is not permitted to direct.

It was Vane himſelf, under the ſhelter of a mean diſguiſe, that had ſo much alarmed Olivia in her evening walks.—He had carefully watched all her ſteps, eagerly gazed upon her pallid countenance, which, however, ſtill retained the traces of that beauty which, in his boyiſh days, had held him captive. A thouſand times he was tempted to throw himſelf at her feet, in order not only to ſolicit, but demand forgiveneſs, for the effects of a conduct which had originated from her apparent imprudence; but no ſooner did he behold the lovely object of his cruelty, than all his reſolutions vaniſhed. The ſerenity of her aſpect, on which grief had made a viſible impreſſion; the beauty of her perſon, which, though waſted by the rigour of confinement, ſtill retained all its native elegance; but more than all the reſt, the intereſting ſimplicity of her amuſements convinced him, the mind muſt be innocent to which ſuch ſimple pleaſures could afford delight; and that a virtuous

fortitude

fortitude alone could have ſupported her through ſuch a long ſeries of uncommon diſtreſs. The conflicts he endured brought on a ſlow fever, the effects of which ſoon became as alarming to himſelf as they were viſible to thoſe few with whom he had intruſted the ſecret of his return; and even Randal, ſoftened by his ſufferings, urged him to take ſome ſteps, in order to effect a ſpeedy reconciliation with Mrs. Vane.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLVI.

A Reconciliation, and its Conſequences.

MRS. Vane frequently ſat whole hours in a delightful temple which her huſband, in his firſt moments of gratitude, had conſecrated to the deity to whom he thought himſelf ſo much indebted. It was called *The Temple of Hymen.* On a beautiful painting was repreſented Love and Hymen, in the moſt perfect harmony and friendſhip with each other; at their feet Envy and Diſcord throwing their ſnakes around, who appeared to obſerve the union as the certain ruin of their deſtructive influence, whilſt a little Cherub was attempting to throw a veil over them, in order to conceal and prevent their deteſted purpoſe.

The Spring had juſt withdrawn her tranſporting

tranſporting beauties, to give place to the equal delights of Summer. The ripened ſtrawberry peeped from between the leaves, and every tree ſeemed proud of preſenting its grateful offerings of pleaſing variety to its fair protectreſs; who, tempted by the fineneſs of the afternoon, determined to indulge herſelf and all her little favourites, by partaking of every ſweet the gay profuſion offered. Accompanied and aſſiſted by her maid, ſhe conveyed her guiltleſs, but affectionate companions into the temple, where ſhe preſented each with a treat ſuitable to their different taſtes. She even ventured to indulge her birds with liberty to fly about the garden; for when ſummoned by her well-known voice, ſhe knew they would eagerly attend her call. She had mentioned her intention of drinking tea that afternoon in the temple; and having taken her work and a book, the hours had ſtolen imperceptibly away, and ſhe had not a thought of returning to the houſe

till

till her maid came to inform her it was near eight o'clock; and ſhe was apprehenſive that ſhe would catch cold if ſhe ventured to ſtay out any longer. She found more difficulty than ſhe imagined in recovering her little captives; and ſhe was obliged to purſue her favourite Canary bird (one of thoſe that Vane had placed in her dreſſing-room, previous to her arrival at the Grove) to the very confines of her garden, before he would obey her ſummons. No ſooner had ſhe caught the little rover than, by way of puniſhment, ſhe hurried him into his cage, without careſſing him with her uſual fondneſs.—"Ungrateful bird!" ſhe cried, with gentle accents, "would you, like your cruel maſter, wiſh to forſake me?—wiſh to fly the hand that has ſo long fed and guarded you from danger?—Go, ingrate, and repent your folly." Ah, Phœbe, ſays ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to her humble attendant, would I could as eaſily bring back my beloved Henry as I could this little truant!

truant! with what rapture would I fold the dear runaway to my deſerted boſom! —And ſhould you really rejoice at the return of my cruel maſter, Madam? enquired her maid: for my part, if ever I marry, and my huſband chooſe to leave me, as he went to pleaſe his own humour, he ſhould ſtay away ever after to pleaſe mine; for I am ſure I could not be ſo patient as you have been. —I merit no applauſe, replied the gentle Olivia, for ſubmitting myſelf to thoſe injunctions which it is my duty to comply with; but ſo far from feeling any reſentment againſt Mr. Vane, he was never more dear to my heart than at this moment: all the diſpleaſure I feel is againſt myſelf; and I ſhould think the longeſt life too ſhort, could I be allowed to make him happy, and by ſo doing atone for the ſeverity of thoſe conflicts which I have, though undeſignedly, brought upon him.

Let any one imagine, if it be poſſible, what muſt be, at that moment, the feel-

ings of Mr. Vane, who overheard this converſation!—it afforded ſuch delight to his deſpairing mind as departed ſouls may be ſuppoſed to experience in their firſt admittance to a ſtate of perfect bliſs! Mr. Vane had, by the aſſiſtance of Olivia's ſervant, been privately conducted into the garden, on being informed of her intentions to drink tea there. It was the ſame ſervant that Olivia had choſen, from the number of her domeſtics, to remain with her; and though he was ſincerely attached to his miſtreſs, he was more ſo to his maſter; and when intruſted with the news of his return, and admitted to his preſence, it was with the utmoſt difficulty they could prevail upon him not to betray the important ſecret; for ſo great was the honeſt creature's joy at this unexpected increaſe to his happineſs, that he wiſhed to impart it to every one he ſaw. More eager was he to acquaint his dear, his amiable lady, with this joyful event;—but on being told, that to conceal

ceal it for a time was the only means to bring about the desired reconciliation, he strictly promised to observe secrecy and silence—and had done so. By him it was that Vane had been carefully hidden in a part of the garden where he could, without any danger of being discovered, not only see all that was going forwards, but distinguish every word that should pass. Vane, on hearing such soft tenderness escape the lips of his adorable Olivia, imagined that Providence had kindly offered him this propitious moment, in return for the sincerity of his repentance: he therefore eagerly rushed from the place of his concealment, and threw himself at the feet of Olivia. Repeat, he cried, with an emotion that too well discovered his agitated state of mind,—repeat, my injured Olivia, those enraptured sounds of pardon and of peace to the most repentant sinner that ever knelt for mercy, or happiness and I must bid an eternal farewell to each other.—Like Noah's dove, I

forſook a ſecure and bliſsful aſylum in which Providence had placed me; and from that ill-fated hour I have had no place to reſt my weary head; no peace has found entrance to my wretched ſoul.

—Olivia beheld her huſband at her feet; ſhe imperfectly heard his voice ſoliciting her forgiveneſs, and, but for his aſſiſtance and that of her ſervant, would have ſunk upon the boſom of the earth. For ſome minutes ſhe remained totally inſenſible; and Vane, frantic with deſpair at ſeeing the ſituation to which his ſudden appearance had reduced her, branded himſelf with the epithets of a tyrant and a murderer. Soon, however, a burſting ſigh gave ſigns of returning life: ſhe opened her eyes,—and found herſelf tenderly ſupported in the arms of her huſband! She enquired if it was not all deluſion. The roſe of delight that moment crimſoned her modeſt cheek; and her whole ſoul was filled with ſuch unutterable joy, that no room was left for the ſmalleſt trace of reſentment.

ſentment. Every diſagreeable reflection was loſt in the ſatisfaction of ſeeing Mr. Vane, and being convinced, from his ſelf-accuſations, he no longer doubted her innocence.

The ſervants by this time all aſſembled around them, being alarmed by the cries of Vane and Olivia's maid; and it was fortunate they had been ſo; for Vane, overpowered by his own painful yet delightful feelings, ſtood almoſt in as much need of help as Olivia. They were immediately conducted into the houſe, and ſoon reſtored to a more perfect ſenſe of their happineſs, by receiving every proper aſſiſtance and neceſſary application which their agitated ſtate of mind required.

Olivia would not ſuffer Vane to remain a moment in ſuſpenſe. She aſſured him that ſhe cheriſhed no reſentment at what had paſſed; and that the pleaſure of finding him return, without being any longer tormented with doubts of her ſincerity,

was ſo invaluable a bleſſing, that ſhe was convinced, from the delight it imparted to her mind, that her happineſs would be complete, if he could be prevailed upon never to recollect what had paſſed. Vane readily promiſed to grant a requeſt with which it was ſo much his own intereſt to comply.

The next day an expreſs was ſent to inform Mr. and Mrs. Goldwyn of the happy revolution of affairs at the Grove, and to ſolicit their immediate preſence once more, to witneſs and partake in the happineſs of their beloved daughter. Olivia likewiſe deſired that all her brothers and ſiſters might, on this happy occaſion, be permitted to accompany them; which was inſtantly complied with, as was a ſimilar invitation that had been ſent to Sir Robert and Lady Clifton.

Nothing but the cheerful ſound of joy was now heard at the Grove and its environs. Congratulations were received from every quarter; and thoſe very perſons

ſons who had been *the loudeſt to condemn* were now *the moſt eager to praiſe.*

Randal was immediately diſcharged with ignominious contempt; and never afterwards would Mr. Vane admit him to his preſence, though earneſtly intreated by Olivia to pardon him. The loſs of his ſalary, which he had for more than thirty years received from the family from which he was now baniſhed, added to the diſcovery that was made of his repeated impoſitions and rapacious dealings with many of the tenants, and his being obliged to refund ſeveral ſums that he had ſo unjuſtly obtained, preyed ſo heavily upon his mind and ſpirits, that he very ſoon fell the ſacrifice of his own guilty avarice. None but a few of his neareſt relations followed him to the grave, from whom neither the tear of pity or regret was ſeen to fall.

In the midſt of the ſcenes of joy and delight that were again diffuſed at the Grove, the happineſs of the whole party

was interrupted by a fever which attacked Mr. Vane. Olivia inſtantly ſent for Mr. Beevor, who, much alarmed at the ſituation in which he found his patient, called in more aſſiſtance, as the diſorder under which the unhappy Vane now laboured, had been brought upon him by the ſeverity of his own reflections in his ſtate of remorſe and agitation: it was of too obſtinate a nature to be eaſily ſubdued; and his life was for many days deſpaired of.

Olivia would ſuffer no one to attend Mr. Vane, or adminiſter his medicines, but herſelf; nor could even the gentle authority of Mr. Goldwyn, whoſe interference was ſolicited by the reſt of her friends, prevail with her to go into a bed, or take off her cloaths, whilſt her huſband's life was in ſo precarious a ſtate. She thought not of herſelf—every fear was for him alone. In every interval of reaſon, the ſuffering Vane poured forth his tender, ſoul-affecting acknowledgments; and it was ſometimes neceſſary to tell him

that

that Olivia was retired to reſt, in order to convey repoſe to himſelf.

The criſis of Vane's diſorder, however, at length arrived; and he was ſoon afterwards pronounced out of danger, not only to the joy of the whole family, but that of every one who had been acquainted with the intereſting ſituation of the now happy Olivia. The cheerfulneſs of Lady Clifton had, during this awful period, been of infinite ſervice. Having been bleſſed with an unuſual ſhare of vivacity, ſhe had ſuch an unconquerable averſion to deſpair, that it was ſure to be baniſhed by every glimmering ray of hope; and her agreeable livelineſs had, in a great meaſure, kept up the ſpirits of every one within its reach.

Olivia had imparted to Mr. Goldwyn her ſuſpicions, that it was to Mr. Beevor ſhe had been indebted for thoſe letters which had been ſent to her under the ſignature of The Friendly Spy; and Mr. Goldwyn informed him, with the ſmile of

approbation, of a heavy charge that Olivia had againſt him — ſuch a one, he humorouſly aſſured him, to which few would wiſh to plead not guilty, even in a court of juſtice. He produced the letters; and Mr. Beevor was too much the man of honour to deny his own hand-writing. Mr. Goldwyn was ſo charmed with the Friendly Spy, that ever after the moſt perfect cordiality ſubſiſted between them; and he inſtantly made an offer to undertake the important charge of the education of Mr. Beevor's three ſons. Mrs. Beevor was likewiſe introduced to Mrs. Vane, and the two ladies were ſo mutually pleaſed with each other, that their acquaintance ſoon ripened into a friendſhip that ended not but with their lives. — And if the wiſhes of mortals may be permitted to hope that friendſhip, which is undoubtedly the moſt generous and noble of all human connections, meets the approbation of Heaven, it will be renewed with additional ſtrength, and bloom with unfading

fading honour, when releaſed from the gloomy, the inactive confines of the grave.

When Mr. Vane was perfectly recovered, their gueſts prepared for their departure from the Grove; but not without having received a promiſe that their viſit ſhould ſoon be returned.

CHAP. XLVII.

A Letter arrives, which gives both Pleaſure and Pain.

AT this time Mrs. Vane received a letter from the old gentleman who lived in the village to which ſhe had been ſo cruelly conveyed by the ſelfiſh deſigns of Randal: it was to the following purport. That at the time the picture from Mr. Goldwyn reached him, he was confined to his bed. Having cheriſhed hopes of being able to write himſelf an anſwer to the letter, in which was incloſed the likeneſs of a beloved brother, he had, from time to time, deferred explaining himſelf on the ſubject; but finding his diſorder daily increaſing, he was at laſt compelled to employ an emanuenſis for that purpoſe. He had no doubts of Olivia's being the grand-

grand-daughter of his brother, and the only relation which the mercileſs ſcythe of time and death had left him. He acknowledged her as ſuch; and aſſured her, the wreck or poor pittance of that ſplendid fortune which had belonged to their family, and now remained in his poſſeſſion, would very ſoon be her's.—Sir Edward Mornington's epiſtle concluded with tender expreſſions of love to his niece, and intreaties, that ſhe would impute his not requeſting to ſee her to no other motive than a deſire of not giving pain—ſenſible that a meeting would be attended with mutual regret, and perhaps ſerve to deprive him of that reſignation and compoſure with which he was now prepared to leave the world. He confeſſed that his pride had led him to conceal his rank and title; many follies, a few vices, ſome ſecret ſorrows, and a multiplicity of unavoidable miſchances having reduced his fortune to a mere competency, and rendered him unable to ſupport the dignity

of

of his rank; adding, that he had lived in the pleaſing expectation of addreſſing his brother by a title that had belonged to him, if he had lived to claim it.

In a few days after they had received the foregoing account, they had a letter to inform them of his death. Mr. Vane went over. Sir Edward Mornington was buried, according to his own deſire, very privately, in the village where he died. Seven thouſand pounds, that were placed in the funds, were left Mrs. Vane, with no other incumbrance than an annuity of thirty pounds a year, to be paid his ancient houſekeeper during her life. Some family-jewels, pieces of plate, and other valuables, were likewiſe bequeathed to Olivia, which were removed to Vane-Grove; and ſhe had the melancholy ſatisfaction to ſee one of her rooms decorated with the venerable portraits of many of her anceſtors.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLVIII.

Sir Edward Mornington's Sentimental Legacy to his Niece, with his Epitaph.

MY life, ſweet Olivia, orphan-child of a beloved brother, has not been a long one: But my experience has been ſufficient to inform me, that the world in general, by ſuſpecting me to be poor and a humoriſt, has appeared without diſguiſe, and convinced me that merit, honour, and virtue, have little to hope from its favour, without being attended by ſome gilded, or more diſtinguiſhing appendages.

Never, therefore, trifle away one precious hour of life with people who are incapable of imparting knowledge; becauſe they cannot receive any pleaſure but what ariſes from accidental advantages; who eſtimate the worth of others, either for the antiquity

tiquity of their birth, or the weight of their purſe,—who, after making violent profeſſions of friendſhip, will, if the wheel of fortune turn in your diſfavour, take every opportunity of ſhewing the world they deſpiſe you for not being ſo rich or fortunate as themſelves; and will ſecretly laugh at you for having believed them guilty of a ſincere attachment.

That this is a ſtrange world mortals often exclaim. There is truth in the obſervation:—Yet, what is it but our ſtrange humours which makes it ſo?

Dangerous and difficult it is to tread the paths of ambition with an honeſt and uncorrupted mind. Diveſt yourſelf of pride; 'tis an enemy to peace, and the determined adverſary of contentment. Adorn yourſelf in the plain, but eaſy, unaſſuming robe of humility; you will find roſes in your path; and though there may be ſome thorns, they will not wound

you

you deeply. Adverſity often proves itſelf a friend—Proſperity a dangerous enemy.

To be guilty of intentional injuſtice in our own eyes, is far more diſtreſſing than to be ſo in the eyes of the whole world. A mind pure and unſpotted, and at peace with itſelf, is of greater value than a diadem.

Pleaſing and captivating is the bounteous hand of Nature; and various are the ſweets with which ſhe decorates the ſcenes around us. Deteſted, therefore, be every kind of art, or affectation, which would pervert the generous deſigns of ſo indulgent a benefactreſs.

That benevolent Power which ſo kindly gave us liberty to enjoy the good things of this world, expects we ſhould ſet limits to our deſires, and not infringe upon his bounty by licentiouſneſs, vice, and folly.

Innocence

Innocence is no ſhelter againſt the tongue of ſlander; but it will prevent our being wounded by its malice.

It is a certain truth, that an unmerciful man cannot be a good one. Cruelty to animals, I have ever found an undeniable proof of a bad heart. He that gave ſo many helpleſs creatures for our uſe, and dedicated their very lives to our ſervice, did not expect us to abuſe and torment them.

Fear is a weakneſs of the mind, which we ſhould exert our utmoſt efforts to conquer: but the frailty of our nature is often found acting in oppoſition to our reaſon:—And ſtrange, though true it is, death has ſometimes been the conſequence of the fear of itſelf.

Reflecting on death makes it become familiar to the mind, and inſenſibly the pale and ghaſtly ſpectre loſes his terrors. When we conſider him as the only guide

and

and friend, whoſe province it is to conduct us to the land of peace, it will ſurely reconcile us to the manner of his performing his office. How ſweet the ſoul-reviving reflection to the ſons and daughters of affliction,—that, though ſorrow, care, trouble, and pain are our portion on this ſide the grave, 'tis in the power of the meaneſt and moſt wretched being to ſecure peace and endleſs felicity on the other!

Few people can be brought to think ſeriouſly of their follies. If they would be prevailed upon to do ſo, they would often find them the ſource of their wretchedneſs. Chance, fortune, and ſometimes Providence itſelf, is branded as the cauſe of thoſe very calamities we bring upon ourſelves.

It is the nature of benevolence to act in uniſon with the Sun—which ſhines as brilliant on the meaneſt ſhrub as on the moſt

moſt gaudy and captivating flower, and diffuſes its benign influence on all around.

Though it is juſt and right to forgive an injury, venture not to truſt that perſon a ſecond time, who has once deceived you.

Friendſhip is the moſt noble and generous paſſion of the ſoul, and adverſity the furnace in which it may be tried. Never doubt their ſincerity, who did not forſake you when encompaſſed by misfortunes.

What is fame? A phantom, vague, airy, unſubſtantial, and uncertain. If to-day it is ours, to-morrow it blows its trumpet for another. What avail the laurels of glory, or the pageantry of pride, to decorate our grave? Will the reſounding clamour of applauſe reach us in that dark encloſure? Or will the pomp of ſculpture enliven the manſion of the tomb?—May

no

no ſurviving friend burthen the ſpot in which I am laid with any of Death's proud trappings!

Let the following lines be inſcribed upon my tomb: they were written at a time when flattery would have been a diſgrace to the portrait, and inſincerity conſidered as a crime.

Here ſleeps a man, who ne'er a friend deceiv'd;
Who lov'd the world, and yet in Chriſt believ'd;
Who vice abhorr'd, ſoon as its ſnares were known;
Another's crime forgave, but not his own.—
Whoſe follies ended with youth's ſetting ſun;
Whoſe happy hours were few, and ſwiftly run.
What after death remains why not enquire?
To bliſs ſupreme immortal ſouls aſpire.
'Tis that which gives the weary wretch repoſe,
Cheers the ſad heart when life's gay ſcenes ſhall cloſe;
Softens our cares, ſupports thro' toil and pain;—
Though born to die,—we die to live again.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIX.

The Viſit Returned.

MR. VANE, hurt at ſeeing Olivia's ſpirits much depreſſed by the ſudden death of Sir Edward Mornington, propoſed paying a viſit to Mr. Goldwyn, and from thence proceding to Sir Robert Clifton's, flattering himſelf that change of ſcene would at this time prove beneficial; and he was not diſappointed. Olivia, on entering the houſe of her indulgent parents, as ſhe ever juſtly called them, felt a perfect enthuſiaſm of delight. To be once more a happy inmate beneath their paternal roof, was a bleſſing which her grateful heart had long panted to enjoy. To be accompanied by Mr. Vane, who was now all that her fondeſt hopes could wiſh, was ſuch an addition

to

to her felicity, as required more philoſophy than had fallen to her ſhare, to conceal from the penetrating eye of affection. She viſited all her old neighbours, called at every poor cottage, the inhabitants of which had before experienced many proofs of her liberality. — Some of her old ſchool-companions ſtill remained with Mr. Goldwyn: ſhe renewed her acquaintance with them; and the remembrance of every ſorrow was ſoon loſt in the placid and heart-felt ſatisfaction of the preſent happy moment.

Olivia would partake no pleaſures but ſuch as her young companions were allowed to ſhare. She rambled with them through every walk that ſhe had ſo often frequented; and even felt an increaſing fondneſs for the ſweet ſcenes of her youthful days. Not a tree had increaſed its foliage but reminded her of ſome cheerful hour that had been paſſed beneath its ſhade, when it was leſs venerable. Perhaps too ſome other remembrances

brances might be revived by the renewed intercourſe with thoſe delightful ſcenes; but as they were now recalled without regret, they left no unpleaſant reflections upon her mind.

After ſtaying ſome weeks with Mr. and Mrs. Goldwyn, they ſet off for London; where they were received by Sir Robert and Lady Clifton with the ſincereſt pleaſure. Olivia was ſoon hurried by her lively friend to every place that contained either novelty or entertainment; and they were continually engaged with the moſt brilliant and faſhionable circles. But being a ſtranger to the etiquettes and humours of high-life, and not being able to diſcover the faſcinating charm that held ſo many enſlaved in the purſuit of amuſements, that appeared to her tireſome and unintereſting, often ſighed in ſecret for that moment which would again reſtore her to the more ſatisfactory enjoyment of rational retirement; in which ſhe could partake the pleaſure of ſociety, without

out

out being obliged to ſacrifice almoſt every hour to the humour and caprices of others.

Olivia, however, found herſelf highly entertained, at ſeeing ſome of our beſt plays admirably performed; though ſhe was ſure to get laughed at for her unfaſhionable ſenſibility. She was charmed at the Opera, amuſed at the Pantheon, and aſtoniſhed at a Maſquerade, to which ſhe had been prevailed upon to accompany her friend.

The public buildings ſurpriſed her; but the crouds of people that filled every place of entertainment amazed her more than any thing ſhe ſaw; becauſe it convinced her, that the grand purſuit of mortals muſt be pleaſure, or ſo many would not be found at every public place.—She beheld her Sovereign with veneration, and his amiable Queen with delight: But though ſhe was neither captivated with the flattery which ſhe daily received, nor intoxicated by the giddy whirl of repeated

engagements, ſhe was frequently entertained, and too polite to appear inſenſible to the pains that were taken by her friends to render her ſtay in London agreeable. The amuſements to which Olivia had been accuſtomed from her birth, were ſo different, of ſo much more ſerene and ſolitary a kind, that ſhe ſometimes thought a life of pleaſure muſt be, upon the whole, a life of ſlavery.

Vane, whilſt bleſt with the ſociety of Olivia, and no longer doubting her affection being all his own, found every place alike capable of affording him delight. He therefore enjoyed the gaieties of London with ſatisfaction; but no ſooner did he receive the firſt hint from Olivia, that ſhe wiſhed to return to Vane-Grove, than he inſtantly ſet about preparing for their departure, which an unexpected accident prevented taking place ſo ſoon as they intended.

Lady Clifton had unfortunately, ſince her marriage, become very intimate with

two or three young ladies of faſhion, who had taken infinite pains to laugh her out of every city idea, and repeatedly ridiculed her for the unfaſhionable fondneſs, which ſhe had once or twice ventured to acknowledge for Sir Robert. They were perpetually forming engagements, which, without Lady Clifton was of the party, they proteſted would be inſupportable; and, by ſo doing, left her no hour for the more placid and real enjoyments of domeſtic pleaſures. She was at this time ſome months advanced in her pregnancy: They affected to lament her ſituation as very unfortunate; for the ſpoiling a fine ſhape, they inſiſted, was one of the greateſt misfortunes that ladies of faſhion could experience. They likewiſe adviſed her to take hold of the only advantage her preſent mortifying condition could afford, that of having her humour complied with in every thing. It was the only atonement, they declared, the wretch could make for the train of mor-

tifications which he had brought upon her.

Lady Clifton, naturally gay, and too much captivated by the pleaſures of high-life, to which an union with Sir Robert Clifton had ſo flatteringly introduced her, found the advice ſo agreeable to the wiſhes of her own giddy vivacity, that ſhe was eaſily perſuaded to adopt it: Sir Robert had ventured to hint his diſlike to ſuch unceaſing interruptions of every rational enjoyment. Her tears and diſpleaſure had, however, kept him ſilent, from the time he became acquainted with her ſituation. Sir Robert was delighted with the proſpect of being a father.—If he had not a ſon, his eſtate would devolve upon a diſtant branch of the family; and from long-rooted prejudice it ſo happened, that he had a particular diſlike to the perſon on whom the eſtate was entailed. Yet he was ſo much alarmed leſt the perpetual buſtle in which Lady Clifton lived ſhould be a means to diſappoint him of his flat-

tering

tering hopes, that he earneſtly requeſted Mrs. Vane to caution his Eliza againſt the danger, which he ſo much apprehended would be the certain conſequence of ſuch irregular hours, and continually hurrying from one crouded place of public diverſion to another. Mrs. Vane was unwilling to take upon her ſo unpleaſant an office, as that of endeavouring to convince any one they acted wrong; but a few mornings after afforded her ſo fair an opportunity of obliging Sir Robert, without any appearance of deſigning to do ſo, that ſhe determined not to loſe it.

CHAP. L.

Admonitions received, as they uſually are, with Unthankfulneſs, Indifference, and Diſlike.

THE two friends were by themſelves in Lady Clifton's dreſſing-room, when the latter, who had not riſen till very late, complained of languor, fatigue, and lowneſs of ſpirits.—"And can you be ſurpriſed, my friend, at feeling ſuch complaints, when you take ſuch infinite pains to bring them on yourſelf?" 'How ſo,' cried Lady Clifton, 'what would you have me do?'—"Acquire, my beloved friend, ſufficient reſolution not to forfeit real enjoyments in the purſuit of ſuch as will repay the ſacrifice with a long train of mortifications." 'Nonſenſe,' cried Lady Clifton, impatiently: 'for Heaven's ſake, how

how came ſo diſmal a thought to enter your imagination? Is it not incumbent upon people of faſhion to keep up their dignity, by not jogging on in the ſame track with the undiſtinguiſhed and ſtupid vulgar?'

"It may be ſo," replied the gentle Olivia; "but I ſhould ſuppoſe that health is as neceſſary to the happineſs of the great, as it has ever been found, and acknowledged to be of thoſe leſs-aſpiring mortals, who are not known by the flattering appellation of the great; nor ought domeſtic pleaſures to be given up and ſacrificed for ſuch as will not, in the ſilent hour of ſolitude, ſtand the teſt of reflection. Sir Robert Clifton, I think, enters very little into the ſpirited diſſipation of the times: he loves his own home much better than I expected to have ſeen him, after being brought up amidſt the great world. He likewiſe appears particularly happy in the expectation of being a parent."

'Horrid! ridiculous!' cried Lady Clifton, 'ſuch old-faſhioned ideas would do very well in thoſe days of patriarchal pride, when a man lived the Lord knows how many thouſand years; and was never happy without being followed by a train of two or three hundred ſons and daughters: but, thank God! the people of our days have no ſuch prepoſterous ambition: therefore, as Providence has thought it neceſſary to curtail our years, it by way of atonement has increaſed the number of our amuſements, to repair the loſs of the one by the ſupply of the other; which I am ſure theſe antediluvian ſouls very much wanted.'

Olivia was much chagrined at the unſeaſonable levity of her friend;—ſhe likewiſe felt hurt at her inability to ſerve the cauſe in which ſhe had, though reluctantly, engaged.

"I find it is uſeleſs," cried Mrs. Vane, "to perſuade you to hear the admonitions of friendſhip whilſt in your preſent humour;

mour; perhaps I may not have the ſame reluctance to combat in one more propitious to my cauſe, when the world has given you diſguſt ſufficient to make you willing once more to reviſit Vane-Grove."

Lady Clifton ſaw Olivia was both hurt and diſpleaſed—ſhe inſtantly held out her hand, and ſeating herſelf by the ſide of Olivia, with a humorous archneſs in her countenance and manner, ſhe declared herſelf then ready to hear as many of the good Mr. Goldwyn's precepts as ſhe ſhould be pleaſed to favour her with: 'but, my dear Olivia,' ſhe continued, 'attempt not to teach me the obedience you have practiſed; for, believe me, was Sir Robert to think of confining me as your tyrant has done his ſubmiſſive help-mate, I ſhould ſet his authority at defiance, and go to France, Hanover, or any where, with the firſt pretty fellow that would take me, to avoid his odious confinement and chains.'

Olivia immediately aroſe. "I have

done, Lady Clifton, I will never again trouble you, either with my dear Mr. Goldwyn's precepts, or any of my own advice: therefore excuſe the attempt, which was dictated by the ſincerity of a heart unacquainted with diſguiſe."—She left the room, notwithſtanding all the perſuaſions of Lady Clifton to detain her.

A few evenings after, Mr. and Mrs. Vane accompanied Sir Robert and Lady Clifton to a concert and ball, which was given by Lord and Lady Carrington. On their return home their carriage was ſtopped by a number of others, which impeded their getting forwards for ſome minutes. Sir Robert's coachman, who had been drinking pretty freely, proved reſolute in driving on, and unfortunately overturned the carriage. Happily, however, none of the company received any other hurt than being extremely terrified: but Lady Clifton was ſo much frightened by the accident, that it occaſioned a miſcarriage, to the great diſappointment of

Sir

Sir Robert; yet he was ſtill more hurt by the ſufferings and danger it brought on his beloved Eliza, who remained for ſome days in a ſtate truly alarming. In the midſt of her agonies ſhe recollected the advice of the more prudent Olivia; and her pangs were increaſed by the ſelf-reproaches with which they were attended.

Olivia, too much affected by the ſufferings of her friend, to retain the leaſt reſentment at the remembrance of having met with ridicule when ſhe deſerved attention, ſaid and did every thing in her power to alleviate the ſeverity of her trials. She attended her with unremitting carefulneſs, praiſed her for the good reſolutions which her dangerous ſituation had taught her to form, and ſtrongly recommended a ſteady perſeverance in them when returning health ſhould again put their ſincerity to the teſt. Much as ſhe wiſhed to get back to the Grove, ſhe could not think of forſaking her friend till ſhe ſaw her able to quit her apart-

ment: nor did the two fair friends take leave of each other without many tears being ſhed; and a promiſe was given by Sir Robert and Lady Clifton to paſs ſome weeks at the Grove, when the health of the latter was ſufficiently reſtored to ſupport the fatigue of ſo long a journey.

CHAP.

CHAP. LI.

The Departure from London.

OLIVIA returned to her own houſe with a delight that few would have experienced at leaving the gaieties of London. Vane exulted at the joy ſhe expreſſed; nor could his raptures be confined in ſilence — a thouſand fond expreſſions eſcaped from his lips; his eyes expreſſed the tranquil happineſs of his enraptured, grateful heart, whilſt he vowed that every moment of the longeſt life would be too ſhort to repay ſuch unexampled generoſity, ſuch forgiving tenderneſs.

Vane-Grove, ſo late the ſcene of melancholy and deſpair, was now the ſeat of happineſs. Thither every delight ſeemed to have been tranſplanted by the hand of Love;

Love;—every domeſtic and dependant partook in the genial influence of the now propitious god. Virtue and induſtry met, from the benevolent hand of Olivia, every encouragement and deſerved reward, whilſt the ſmiles of her indulgent huſband amply repaid her the happineſs ſhe diſpenſed to others.

Not long, however, were they permitted to remain in their beloved retreat. A letter was brought them from Sir Robert Clifton, which contained the moſt earneſt intreaties to accompany them to Bath, her Ladyſhip's phyſicians having ſtrongly recommended her going there immediately, as her health continued in a very alarming ſtate; but ſhe would not conſent to go unaccompanied by Mrs. Vane.

CHAP.

CHAP. LII.

A Journey to Bath.

MR. and Mrs. Vane, though extremely unwilling to leave the Grove, in order again to revisit the bustling scenes of the world, hesitated not a moment in complying with the request of their friends; and the party met in a place appointed for the purpose, at about fifty miles distant from Bath. Lady Clifton expressed the most unfeigned satisfaction at being again blest with the society of her friend. She was much altered; her long confinement had likewise weakened her spirits, which Olivia did not doubt but health would again restore. Sir Robert had suffered so much anxiety on her account, that he stood almost as much in need of a physician as his

his Eliza. But as good has been often ſaid to ſpring from evil, it was never more truly verified than in the caſe of Lady Clifton. She had paid ſo very dear for her obſtinacy and eagerneſs in the purſuit of pleaſure—ſhe had likewiſe brought ſo much diſtreſs upon Sir Robert, by her imprudence, that ſhe determined to be more cautious for the future; and ſhe knew that nothing would ſo much help to confirm her in thoſe good reſolutions as the ſociety of her beloved Olivia, whoſe prudent advice ſhe had diſregarded and laughed at, when it was ſo kindly given.

Bath preſented to Mrs. Vane a freſh ſcene of novelty. Almoſt a ſtranger to the world ſhe inhabited, the more ſhe ſaw of it the greater her ſurpriſe. She expected to have found Bath filled with ſuch numbers of invalids, as muſt inevitably have thrown a gloom on the blooming countenance of health itſelf, if it was to be found in ſuch a crouded receptacle for all human ills. In that, however, ſhe very

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ſoon found an opportunity of diſcovering her miſtake. At the time of Olivia's arrival at Bath, it was crouded with a numerous throng of the beſt company. Diverſions were going forwards for every hour of the day—not *Matthew Bramble* himſelf was more diſconcerted on his arrival than our heroine. It appeared to her an enigma beyond her art to expound, that people ſhould go ſo far in purſuit of health, and then take the very ſteps ſo likely to defeat their own purpoſe.

Lady Clifton was ſoon ſo well recovered, as to partake in the enchanting amuſements of the place; but ſhe had not ſo far forgotten her recent danger as to enter into them with her accuſtomed ſpirit. The whole party frequently went to the Rooms, and had received many invitations to private balls and routes.

Little as Olivia had been ſeen, it was become the faſhion and humour of the day to admire her; a thouſand enquiries were made to diſcover who ſhe was; and ſhe had

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ſeveral times found herſelf extremely diſconcerted by the confident looks and troubleſome attentions of the men, when ſhe had appeared in public. Unconſcious, however, of the power of her charms, ſhe knew not that the report of her being married had occaſioned a ſevere mortification to many of the young men, who had already begun to think her an object worthy of their notice, and therefore marked her for prey.

The charms of Mrs. Vane were now in their meridian ſplendor; whilſt the roſeate bloom of health revelled on the cheek, it ſeemed particularly contrived to adorn. The beauty and graceful gentility of her form had likewiſe every advantage from the artleſs ſimplicity of her dreſs, which, without being ſtudied, was becoming, and without being expenſive, was conſidered as beſt adapted to ſet off to advantage the peculiar elegance of her figure. Lady Clifton heard the praiſes of her friend re-echoed in every part of the rooms; but

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as ſhe knew the native modeſty of Olivia would be more hurt than gratified by being told how much ſhe engaged the general attention, ſhe carefully avoided giving her a hint that would be attended with pain; for ſhe wanted not to be convinced, that no vanity had ever found a place in the boſom of her timid, unaſſuming friend; and that the utmoſt of her ambition extended no farther than to hold captive the heart of her wedded lord.

CHAP.

CHAP. LIII.

An accidental, melancholy, and distressing Meeting.

TO the Assembly, which was for the benefit of the Master of the Ceremonies, our whole party had agreed to go. On their arrival at the Rooms, they found them uncommonly crouded, and the ladies dresses remarkably brilliant. No sooner, however, did Olivia appear, conducted by Sir Robert Clifton, than a buzz of admiration was heard; and, "Who is she? where does she come from?" was the general enquiry. Olivia, confounded, and unable to look up, begged Sir Robert would conduct her to a seat, where she could be able to recover her confusion, and escape the impertinence of the people. Sir Robert, eager to oblige her, led her to one which he

he ſaw vacant at the upper end of the room, and then left her to find Lady Clifton and Mr. Vane, whom he had loſt in the croud. She had not ſat a moment before ſhe heard one gentleman ſay to another, whoſe arm he had hold of, "It is the lovely Mrs. Vane, whom the brute, her huſband, ſhut up for two years in an old caſtle, becauſe he was jealous of ſomebody that happened to like her as well as himſelf; and I ſuppoſe her unconſcionable jailor is dead, by her having regained her liberty."

This little tract of Olivia's hiſtory was not only heard by herſelf, but by a gentleman who was ſitting in a muſing and melancholy poſture at a corner of the room, about two yards diſtance from Mrs. Vane. At hearing the well-known, the heart-wounding tale, it awoke him from his reverie, and, turning ſuddenly round to ſteal a glance of the lovely form he little ſuſpected to be ſo near him, preſented to the view of the aſtoniſhed Olivia the well-

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known features of Lord Davenport. It was indeed himſelf! but ah! how pale, how changed, how unlike the Davenport ſhe once had known! Frightened, however, and terrified leſt Mr. Vane, by coming in ſearch of her, ſhould ſee Lord Davenport, ſhe attempted to fly; but her trembling limbs refuſed their office: ſhe was obliged to ſit down on the firſt ſeat that offered, and the attention of the company being at that moment wholly engaged by a cottillon that was dancing, in which two or three very beautiful women were exhibiting their elegant figures to advantage, the poor invalid ventured to draw near Mrs. Vane, who, with a gentle motion of her hand, endeavoured to prevent his approaching her. "Though inſtant death," he ſoftly ſaid, "was to be the conſequence, I muſt ſpeak to you; 'tis, perhaps, the only moment inexorable fate has left me to bid you a laſt adieu. Ah! may my death atone for the miſeries my ill-fated love and unguarded imprudence brought upon

upon the loveliest of women! Let my present situation plead my pardon for the distress I give you." 'Leave me, Lord Davenport, in mercy leave me,' cried the trembling Olivia; 'and, unless you wish to destroy me, risk not a second meeting with Mr. Vane; deprive me not again of my husband's love and protection; and if it will be any satisfaction to you to know my sentiments, believe me, your sufferings are the only alloy to my happiness.'— "Here then, may I end them forever," replied his Lordship, falling to the earth in a state of insensibility, overcome by feelings, which his weak health rendered him unable to support with fortitude. Olivia gave a faint scream, which brought assistance; and she begged they would endeavour to recover the gentleman who was suddenly taken ill. Her request was instantly complied with; and no sooner did she see his Lordship begin to recover, than the fear of being a second time addressed by him, enabled her to fly. She eagerly

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mixed with the croud, from which ſhe had a few minutes before wiſhed to eſcape: luckily ſhe met her party, juſt coming in at the door. She earneſtly entreated them to accompany her into the next room, complained of the intolerable heat of that they were going to enter; and they readily acquieſced.

Olivia whiſpered Lady Clifton to leave the Rooms as ſoon as poſſible; adding, ſhe would acquaint her with her reaſons for making this requeſt as ſoon as they arrived at their lodgings. Lady Clifton ſaw, by the agitation and the paleneſs which had overſpread the countenance of her friend, that ſhe had met with ſomething to diſtreſs her: ſhe likewiſe obſerved her looking with terror towards the door every time any one entered. She therefore mentioned her being fatigued, and declared, ſhe found the company too much for her ſpirits. The gentlemen inſtantly agreed to return home, and in a few minutes their chairs were ordered.

Mrs.

Mrs. Vane rejoiced, and ſecretly returned thanks to Heaven, at being conveyed from a place in which ſhe had met with ſo painful and unexpected a rencontre; which had awakened unpleaſant reflections, and implanted new terrors.—Lord Davenport dying, to all appearance, yet even in death attached to her, and penitent for what had paſſed, was an object too intereſting to be ſeen with ſtoical indifference, or remembered without regret. She hurried to her chamber, and was immediately followed by Lady Clifton, whom Olivia informed of her having ſeen Lord Davenport, the ſcene that followed, and the terrors ſhe experienced leſt Mr. Vane ſhould have ſeen him likewiſe, and again have cheriſhed ſuſpicions, not more injurious to her honour than to his own peace; and leſt the happineſs they then enjoyed ſhould again become the conſequent ſacrifice.

Lady Clifton told Mrs. Vane, ſhe had not heard of his Lordſhip's being at Bath

till ſome weeks after their arrival; and at the time ſhe was informed of his being there, ſhe was told that he was in ſuch a very ill ſtate of health, as obliged him to be entirely confined to his apartment; and that he only ſtaid at Bath till he was able to bear the fatigue of travelling, when he propoſed going to Montpelier; to which place his lady meant to accompany him. She intreated Olivia to excuſe her not having informed her of theſe circumſtances, as her reaſon for not doing ſo, was to avoid alarming, and giving her pain; adding, that ſhe doubted not but as his lordſhip was well enough to be at the aſſembly, and had ſo unfortunately met her there, he would ſoon fulfil his intention of going abroad: ſhe likewiſe promiſed Olivia to requeſt Sir Robert to diſcover, if poſſible, his deſigns, and the time fixed upon for his departure, and to make excuſes for not going again to any public place during his ſtay.

Olivia felt her ſpirits revived by the tender and affectionate behaviour of her ſympathizing friend; but ſecretly determined to leave Bath if his lordſhip did not quit it within the following week.

Lord Davenport, on recovering from his fit, but before his ſenſes were reſtored to a perfect recollection of what had reduced him to his preſent painful ſituation, enquired what was become of the lovely phantom he juſt remembered to have ſeen? Had ſhe been ſo cruel as to leave him at the very moment he wiſhed to expire at her feet? But this being imagined merely the wild ravings of phrenzy, it created no ſuſpicion that Mrs. Vane, or any other female who was preſent, had given riſe to it. Lady Davenport, who had been engaged at cards in another room, hearing of his lordſhip's ſudden indiſpoſition, eagerly flew to his aſſiſtance; and after tenderly blaming him for running the hazard of increaſing his diſorder, by attempting to mix in ſo large a company, intreated him

to go home; which he very ſoon did, accompanied by his phyſician.

Lord Davenport, convinced by this unexpected meeting with Olivia, that it was impoſſible for him ever to ſee her with that indifference their preſent ſituation demanded, reſolved never again to run the hazard of another interview, leſt Mrs. Vane ſhould conſider him as the aſſaſſin, the deſtroyer of her peace. She had told him that his ſufferings were the only alloy to her happineſs; he would, therefore, remove them from her ſight for ever: one part of the globe was the ſame to him as another. It ſignified but little to ſuch a wretch as himſelf, whether he died in England or France; therefore, at all events, he would leave Bath in two or three days at longeſt. It was a ſacrifice; but love and honour demanded it ſhould be ſo; it was now the only means that could be taken to ſecure the repoſe of the woman he adored. His life he would gladly have yielded, even to the ſword of his

his rival; but the peace of Olivia he would never again attempt to deſtroy. Mr. Reevor had informed him of the happy reconciliation that had taken place between her and Mr. Vane. How cruel would it then be again to plant the thorn of anguiſh in the ſpotleſs boſom of Olivia!

Though Lord Davenport, from this accidental meeting with Mrs. Vane, felt relieved from the heavieſt burthen upon his wounded ſpirits, becauſe it had convinced him, beyond a doubt, the fair cauſe of his ſufferings cheriſhed no reſentment againſt him, in conſequence of which the next day he appeared aſtoniſhingly better; yet it only ſerved to make him more anxious for the moment of his departure, eager to fly the place that contained the only treaſure he wiſhed to poſſeſs; but which was now torn for ever from him. He left Bath in a ſtate of mind neither to be envied or condemned; far too wretched to cheriſh the moſt diſtant

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ray of hope that he ever ſhould be happy, and too ſeverely ſmarting under the laſh of reproaches brought upon himſelf, to admit, in the moſt rigid of his cenſures, a doubt but that the poignancy of his feelings was a ſufficient puniſhment for whatever had been wrong in his conduct. Lord and Lady Davenport ſoon reached Dover; from which place they propoſed going to Calais, in their way to Montpelier.

No ſooner was Lady Clifton made acquainted with Lord Davenport's departure, than ſhe told the welcome tidings to Mrs. Vane, who breathed a ſilent but fervent wiſh that change of ſcene might reſtore his peace, and that health might likewiſe ſhed her moſt indulgent favours to bleſs his remaining days.—The emaciated form ſhe had ſeen fall lifeleſs at her feet would, in ſpite of her utmoſt efforts to forget it, ſometimes haunt her tender imagination; and ſhe thought it no breach of her duty to wiſh happineſs to the diſconſolate

conſolate wanderer, who had once been dear, deſervedly dear to her heart.

Again our friendly and happy party partook in the cheerful and animating pleaſures of Bath; and Olivia, during her ſtay, met with no rival to diſpute her being juſtly entitled to rank firſt in the liſt of beauty.—Vane was gratified and delighted at being poſſeſſed of the envied prize; and the admiration which ever followed the footſteps of Olivia, now ſerved only to increaſe his tenderneſs and attention.

END OF VOLUME II.